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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

TEACHING IS LEADING

by

Louise Joly ©

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
SPRING, 1992

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Claudette Tardif, Committee Member

Date: March 13, 1992

DEDICATION

In memory of my father and to my mother who, as true educators, have given me the freedom to be myself, the love of learning and taught me the importance of reflection.

ABSTRACT

Leadership in the school has traditionally focused on the designated positions associated with school administration. By contrast, Barth (1988:129) sees "the school as a community of leaders" that include not only the teachers and the principals but everyone who is part of it (p. 131). However, little attention has been given to classroom teachers with leadership skills who influence the school community. Recognizing the role and importance of leadership in the classroom and its effect on the school community is the first step to enriching the school community. The study focuses on the perspective of female classroom teacher-leaders because few studies in leadership in general and in school administration reflect the perspective of women.

This study addresses the subject of classroom teacher-leaders and their effect on students, administration, and colleagues. The stories of the two urban high school teachers, identified by their principal as teacher-leaders, provide significant insights into the world of teacher-leaders that can be beneficial to both educators and leaders. Data were also collected from the students to present the students' perspective of teacher-leaders. They provide insights into the concept of learning and the needs of students from a students' perspective.

Teacher-leaders operate from a student-centered philosophy which emphasizes the acquisition of lifelong skills that will assist the emotional, social, physical and cognitive development of the student. They use strategies which guide their students' learning rather than give them only information. As such, they lead their students to develop liefelong learning skills and become more independent in their learning.

The similarities between the transformational model of leadership and the student-centered approach to teaching are pointed out. The study reveals the importance for teachers, as leaders in the classroom, to respect and accept students as unique individuals who can be empowered by involving them in shaping their own learning and by giving them a strong voice in the classroom.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER PAGE

I Overview of the Study 1
  Introduction 1
  On Leadership 4
  Statement of the Problem 6
  Significance of Problem 8
  Assumptions 9
  Delimitations 9
  Limitations 10
  Summary 10

II Review of the Literature 11
  Introduction 11
  Teacher Effectiveness 11
  Leadership 13
  Leadership in the classroom 19
  Characteristics of teacher-leaders . 25
    Knowing oneself 25
    Vision 27
    Voice 28
    Caring 30
  Conclusion 33

III Methodology 34
  Introduction 34
  Selection of School 36
  Selection of Participants 38
  Research Design 39
  Data Collection 40

The Interviews and the observation. 40
The students' participation . . 43
The interview with Lori and each participant 45
Data Analysis 46
Establishing trustworthiness 47
Ethical considerations 50
Understanding the setting 51
Meeting Lori 52

IV The Teacher-Leaders Speak 55
Lori and the teacher-leaders 55
Getting to know Paula 57
Getting to know Pat 61
Understanding the Teacher-Leader . . 65
Teaching is Leading 65
The teachers' philosophy . . . 65
Caring for the students 66
Empowering the students 69
Expressing creativity 74

V Their Students Speak 80
Introduction 80
Being myself 82
Jason's voice 82
Excerpts from Paula's story . . 84
Excerpts from Pat's story . . . 85
Commentary 87
I need lifeskills 89
Angela's voice 89
Excerpts from Paula's story . . 91

Excerpts from Pat's story . . . 92
Commentary 94

VI Teacher-Leaders in the School Community . 96
Introduction 96
Recognizing Teacher-Leaders 97
Lori's Voice 97
Commentary 100
Their Influence on the School Community 101
Lori's voice 101
Excerpts from Paula's story . . 107
Excerpts from Pat's Story . . . 108
Commentary 110
The Needs of Teacher-Leaders 111
Lori's voice 111
Excerpts from Paula's story . . 112
Excerpts from Pat's story . . . 113
Commentary 114

VII Reflections 118
Introduction 118
The Meaning of Teacher-Leader . . . 119
Defining teacher-leaders . . . 119
The creativity of teaching . . 121
The role of the teacher 124
Empowering the School Community . . 130
Empowering Students 130
The students' response 135
The differential influence on high school adolescents 137
The effect on colleagues and

administrators 139
Transformation of a Teacher 140
Implications for further research . 144

References 147

Appendix A 152

Appendix B 154

CHAPTER I

Overview of the Study

Introduction

This study has emerged and developed over time and has been influenced by my life experiences as a woman, as a classroom teacher, as a school counsellor and as an assistant-principal in a rural environment. My own journey has led me to search for my historical roots as a woman so as to better understand the status of women in today's society. Consequently, I feel more confident about exploring the problems women face in society and seek ways in which I, as an educator, can assist adolescent women and men in their own journey.

My involvement with junior high school students has provided me with insights into the world of the adolescent. The current generation of adolescents face a world in transition. The issues that were articulated in the 1960's and that have generated an awareness of cultural biases in our beliefs and our thinking have created an uncertain world for today's youth. Consequently, according to Baker (1985:1), "today's adolescents are experiencing changing moral and sexual standards, profound changes in family structure and difficult choices in values and lifestyle".

Although this affects all adolescents, young women are especially vulnerable. As a group, they have faced much change, controversy and contradictions over the changing role of women in society and this has lead to confusion, myths, and assumptions about themselves and their future. A number of Canadian studies have demonstrated that adolescent women's aspirations of their future relative to their social and professional lives are romanticized and that young women are not aware of the realities of the workplace (Baker, 1985, Bibby & Posterski, 1985, Fahmy-Pomerleau, 1981). Inequality of opportunity in the labour force still exists.

Our educational system still operates from an androcentric world view. Shakeshaft (1989:10) describes how the system of education is male-oriented: "Educational goals and pedagogical principles are defined and dominated by men, but men have no understanding of women's culture". Consequently, adolescent women, "uncomfortable in competitive atmospheres, rather than questioning whether the atmosphere is appropriate, conclude that there is something wrong with them" (p. 10). Adolescent women participating in two Canadian research projects have expressed their concern about the quality of high school education (Baker, 1985; Canadian Teachers' Federation [CTF], 1990). Bibby and Posterski (1985) also found adolescents, both men and women, to be dissatisfied with the school's academic programs.

The recent report "A Cappella" (CTF, 1990:19) reports that a number of adolescent women see no hope for their future and they worry "about the context of on-going school and job responsibilities, social events, world events and daily living". Although they are aware of the greater career opportunities available to them, they do not know how to access them (CTF, 1990). The educational needs of both adolescent women and men are more complex than they were thirty years ago. However, the needs of adolescent women appear to be more numerous. The inequalities in the labour force for women and the small number of women in administrative positions in the schools are well documented and well publicized (Shakeshaft, 1989, Clement, 1980, Freedman, 1980). The strong androcentric, male-oriented approach to education, especially at the secondary level, which fosters inequalities in the educational system for women, further alienates adolescent women from their own sense of identity and from the social and cultural realities of society (CTF, 1990).

Although adolescent women have unique needs, adolescent men also have to be involved in the process of change for we cannot avoid the interdependence of women and men. The male perspective on the world needs to change. Young men also need reassurance about the impact of the change. The question we need to ask is: What is the school doing to help adolescents of today find their place in society and develop their full potential? If we are to remedy the situation, we will need strong role models who can work with adolescent women and men. Leadership is needed to effect the necessary changes.

On Leadership

Leadership is a dynamic concept with a history that consists of a search for its meaning and the nature of its impact. Traditionally, in education, leadership has been studied in the context of administrative positions and used to describe one dimension of administration. Participants or subjects for the studies have been mostly men and over time they have shaped the concept and meaning of leadership.

This has led to many false assumptions about women, administration, and leadership. Both women and men have been socialized to believe the assumptions and the stereotypes that have evolved and they function accordingly. Because the research in the field of leadership in organizations has been done from a male perspective, many women fail to identify with the traditional notions of leadership and consequently do not regard themselves as potential or actual leaders. Only recently have theorists taken an interest in leadership as seen and felt through women's eyes and hearts.

We have a tendency to think that the school administrator is the sole leader in the school community. Frequently, men are the only available role models as administrators. Indeed most of our schools have been dominated by male administrators (Clement, 1980; Shakeshaft, 1989).

Although this is slowly changing (Shakeshaft, 1989) and more effort is being made to include more women in administration, we should also look beyond the administration for leadership. The reality remains that many women, in spite of their leadership ability, prefer to remain in the classroom for various reasons. Many simply prefer the responsibilities and satisfactions of teaching. They enjoy the classroom interaction with the students. Others find the responsibilities of teaching less demanding than those of administration and can thus better juggle their family and professional roles.

As leaders, these individuals are an asset to the school community and have an effect on the school environment. They serve as role models and mentors to the students through their interactions in the classroom and their contributions to the organization of the school. They can help the female students raise and discuss issues concerning women. They can, through their teaching methods, help adolescent women develop their potential through "ways of knowing" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986) that are familiar to them and socialize the male students to the value of seeing and knowing in different ways. Given the opportunity, they can become involved in the formulation of policies and decision-making affecting the school community. They can take a significant role in shaping the culture of the school through a more democratized approach to leadership that operates on compromise, consensus, and teamwork (Freedman, 1980; Hall & Hord, 1986).

In recent years, the literature on leadership has placed less stress on equating leadership with particular formal position of leaders and more on the emergence of leaders throughout society. Freedman (1980:27) states that the emergence of leaders is more attuned to the strong intellectual, emotional and physical attributes possessed by individuals than to the positions these individuals hold. People can be leaders regardless of the positions they hold. Furthermore, he believes that in any population of substantial size, there is "bound to be an adequate reservoir of plentiful leadership" (1980:27). This suggests that, in schools, there is likely an ample supply of leaders to be found among the classroom teachers.

This study will focus on the experiences and interpretations of selected female leaders in the classroom. By focusing on female teachers rather than male leaders and administrators, the study will investigate whether women manifest leadership skills and, consequently, recognize the role women can play as leaders in the educational field. This will give women greater prominence by validating their experiences and recognizing their significant contributions to leadership, thus giving more credibility to their "voices" and their perspectives on education.

Statement of the Problem

The study focuses on two perspectives: those of the female teacher-leaders themselves and those illustrating their influence on school community. I have deliberately focused on teacher-leaders to explore the concept of leadership in education beyond the traditional concept associated with designated administrative positions. By expanding the scope of leadership to include those who are not in designated administrative positions we can better understand the effect of informal leaders on the school organization. This will help us identify potential teacher-leaders whom we can then recognize and support by developing their gifts of leadership.

I have further narrowed the focus to women only, because in education women have traditionally been associated with the classroom and their leadership role in the school often has not been recognized. Their leadership skills are often ignored and thus not fully developed.

A third aspect of this study is the effect on the school community. We can only fully understand the effectiveness of leadership if we gather information from the members of the organization who are in a position to judge and assess its influence.

The following questions guided the development of the study and the analysis of the data:

1. What effect do female teacher-leaders in the classroom appear to have on their colleagues ?
2. What effect do they appear to have on the school's administration?
3. What effect do they appear to have on the students?
4. What effect do they appear to have on the school community?
5. What are the needs of female teacher-leaders?
6. How do these teacher-leaders differ from

"effective" teachers?

Significance of Problem

This study is not only significant for the practice and the theory of organizational leadership but also for practice and theory in education generally. Since it describes and interprets the perspective of two female classroom leaders in Western Canada, it may be of interest to educational practitioners and researchers by providing insights and information:

1. to the participants that will enable them to reflect on their own leadership and the effect they have on the school culture;
2. to the participants on their educational practices and the effects of their teaching on students;
3. to educational administrators regarding the benefits teacher-leaders bring to the school organization, the role they can play in administrative decisions, and the specific needs of teacher-leaders;
4. on a concept of leadership based on an ethic of caring and relationships;
5. to men and women who have leadership qualities to enable them to reflect on the role they can play and on the impact of leaders;
6. to those who work with young people to enable them to reflect on their relationship with young people and their own style of leadership when working with young people;

7. to all educational practitioners, present and future, to reflect on and understand their own practice in the classroom;
8. on issues relating to leadership and to the practice of teaching which may serve as a basis for additional research.

Assumptions

Three basic assumptions underlie this study:

1. That school "leaders" can be identified by school administrators.
2. That their influence can be described.
3. That teacher-leaders are different from effective teachers.

Delimitations

The study was delimited in the following way: the participants were two female teachers in one secondary school, who had been identified by the principal as leaders in their school. The particular school was chosen because I knew the principal and felt she could assist me in identifying teacher-leaders.

My initial definition of teacher-leader was vague and general: individuals who had demonstrated leadership in the school by respecting students and colleagues, established good relationships with the students, fostered school spirit, and were respected and admired by the students and by colleagues.

Limitations

A first limitation of the study was my inexperience as a researcher, an observer, and an interviewer. A second limitation was the two teacher-leaders' and the principal's lack of experience as participants sharing their educational experiences, their thoughts, their opinions, and their feelings. A third limitation was the students' inexperience at sharing their thoughts and feelings about their teachers with the teachers and with me. A fourth limitation was the possibility that the participants idealized their situations.

Summary

In chapter I, I have explained why, unlike most research conducted in the past, this study focuses on the leadership of female teacher-leaders and their effect on the school community.

Chapter II will present a review of the literature as it relates to female teacher-leaders. The research strategy used to collect the stories of all participants is described in Chapter III. Chapter IV presents the stories of the teacher-leaders, Chapter V presents the viewpoint of the students about teacher-leaders who reach out to them, while Chapter VI presents the administrator's perspective on these teacher-leaders. In Chapter VII, the reader will find my reflections on the study itself and on the themes that have emerged from the findings.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

There is very little literature on teacher-leaders. What has been written about teacher-leaders refers to the leadership teachers have among their colleagues and that in a designated position of teacher-leader. The purpose of my research was to study classroom teachers identified by the principal as leaders but not designated as such and with designated responsibilities toward other teachers. The review for this study therefore concentrates only on the literature of the transformational model ofleadership which is grounded in the critical theorists' and the feminist theorists' perspective of leadership. It also concentrates on teaching from a student-oriented model of teaching. Although the two participants are women, I have not reviewed the literature on women in education, since my focus is on leadership in the classroom.

Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness is an issue that has been much discussed and studied to determine quality education. Many educators have outlined different models of teacher effectiveness emphasizing various aspects of teaching.

O'Neill (1988) has recently reviewed the research on teacher effectiveness. He has summarized the data collected by a number of researchers and identified some basic instructional research factors regarding teacher effectiveness. From his review, teacher effectiveness appears to be based more on teaching skills and strategies than on establishing relationship with students. Students' academic achievement is the measurement for students' learning and is correlated with the teacher's performance. This teacher-centered orientation focuses on the ability of the teacher to teach subjects rather than students.

The studies reviewed have mostly taken place in elementary and junior high school but could also be applied to high school. While the literature "strongly favours large group or whole class instruction" (O'Neill, 1988:171), there is minimal support for individualization and small group activity. The studies were also restricted mostly to Reading and Mathematics.

Of the 20 instructional factors identified by O'Neill, a number of them deal directly with teacher performance such as teacher organization and different teaching strategies. I shall elaborate here on two factors that indicate some student-centered perspective: curriculum materials and classroom climate.

The research shows there is some evidence that effective teachers use learning materials that are interesting, challenging and geared to the level of the students (p. 167). As well, they seem to "employ a variety of meaningful exercises and tasks" (p. 167).

Classroom climate reflects the "the tone of communication, the global attitudes and emotional states" of the class (p. 168). It is concerned with the interpersonal relationship of its members from an affective perspective (p. 168). In his review, O'Neill found that although effective classroom climates vary there are some common descriptors. An effective classroom climate is deemed to be first and foremost "supportive and warm" (p. 169). Second, it is considered "to be pleasant, fair, and democratic" (p. 169). Such terms as "personal, congenial and understanding" were also used to complement the other descriptors.

Leadership

Over the years, leadership theory has centered on the individual and the behavior of the leader, prescribing ways to think and act in different situations. The theory has related to the position of the leader in relationship to the subordinates and to the leader's management skills. In recent years, educational theorists have explored leadership from a school organizational perspective which perceives the nature of the school as an institution for the development of children as opposed to a bureaucratic one. From this perspective evolved an application of one alternative to the traditional concept of leadership, that of transformational leadership. For this study, I have examined four theorists who have explored and interpreted this new approach.

According to Foster (1989:48), it is the nature of humanity to "search for community...to attempt to establish patterns of living based on mutual need and affection, development, and protection". The creation of community is a dynamic, on-going process that is never completed. It is an inter-active process among the individuals that forms the social structures, the foundations of society, that produce the conditions for actions. Leadership engages "the agents in transformative practices which can change the social structures and forms of community (Foster, 1989:49).

Leadership, by this definition, does not refer to only the leader but also the followers. The two are intertwined and share a dynamic vision of the community based on shared values that will guide their actions to meet the needs and goals of the community. In their pursuit of their vision, the leader and the followers work together, at times exchanging roles. This relationship empowers the individuals to action. They are not mere puppets of "the organization", manipulated by the leader but actors involved in the dynamic process of community building.

Foster (1989) identifies four important criteria for the practice of transformational leadership. Leadership, he states, must be critical, transformative, educative, and ethical. To build a dynamic community based on the needs of its people, it is crucial that the leader examine the conditions of social life and inquires about the commonsense of the social practices. "Organization and modern social structures are in fact created by us" (Foster, 1986:184) and it is the responsibility of leader to examine and demystify these structures that are subtle but very powerful in creating social stereotypes. In particular, he stresses the importance of probing our linguistic labelling, which distorts reality and masks the reality. (p. 185). This must be subject to reflection and critique and will orient the leader "toward a reconceptualization of life practices where common ideals of freedom and democracy stand important" (Foster, 1989:52).

This naturally leads to a transformation of the community's consciousness that should lead to significant changes in the social constructs which impede the development of freedom and democracy. The transformation of the structures of language, economic and political organizations, systems of belief, and cultural and ethical norms occurs "in small doses, in the actions and activities of various groups and individuals" (Foster, 1989:53).

An essential criterion of leadership is education. The leader presents an analysis of the present situation and a vision of what it could be. However, the various members become involved through an interactive process in the self-reflection and the reconceptualization of the social structures that orient their lives. This allows for the critique of the ways and the means that the institution or society restrains or promotes life and invites new narratives for a possible gradual re-structuring.

It therefore follows that a leader has an ethical responsibility to the members and to the community. She/He is morally responsible not only to the individual but also to the cause of community. Leadership which is ethically-based takes on the tasks of critiquing and reconceptualizing the social conditions that are dehumanizing and threatening to the ideal of a just society (Foster, p.56).

Burns' (1978) concept of leadership derives from the dynamics of conflict and power and is linked to the collective purpose. "Leadership is grounded in the seedbed of conflict...which galvanizes, prods, motivates people" (1978:38). Leadership is the force that will confront the conflicts. The leader initiates the collaboration needed to examine, explore, and find a solution to the conflict by summoning the others and taking on various roles to understand the conflict and guide the group towards a solution for the benefit of the community.

The leader is in a position of power, but not to command or rule. On the contrary, the leader recognizes the underlying values of the conflict and seeks to mobilize the community to effect change by raising the consciousness of its members about the existing contradicting values structure and practice in the community. Through a dynamic vision of a new community guided by "near-universal ethical principles of justice" (p. 42), the leader seeks to elevate the members to a higher level of morality.

The leader is the agent who brings the community members together to transform their consciousness of the existing social conditions and empower them to act to bring about "real change", by the "continuing interaction of attitudes, behavior, and institutions monitored by alterations in individual and collective hierarchal values" (p. 44) that enables the creation of a new social order. The leader not only communicates a new vision that encompasses the needs, aspirations, and values of the members, but initiates the process and maintains and effects the relationship with the followers. The leader is only one member of the community and at times becomes the follower, for new leaders emerge in certain circumstances.

Blackmore (1989) sees this concept of leadership as offering new elements and new parameters that will integrate women's experiences, voices, and vision: women will be more easily recognized and thus more visible as leaders. According to her, leadership is a dynamic process within the community. When members recognize the flaws of the existing social reality and want change, they share a dynamic vision which empower them to action. Their vision for a new society is based on a "relational view of morality" (p. 120). Thus the members "recognize the interdependence of people...and sees moral judgment" (p. 120) as based upon concern and responsibility of the self to others within a specific context (p. 120). This would lead to a society that is more caring and committed to the development of the individuals.

Blackmore stresses the importance of examining the value structures within the historical context since the sharing of power, language and knowledge have assume gendered biases over the years (p. 123). These need to be continually analyzed to give the leadership a comprehensive sense of the constructs that shape society.

Smyth's (1989) "pedagogical" and "educative" view of leadership demonstrates an alternative that is more inclusive than the traditional view and therefore more appropriate to the nature of schools. The school reflects the social reality of the community and when it becomes involved in "reproducing inequalities and injustices", then it becomes the school's responsibility to affect change. Leaders in the schools, states Smyth (1989:186), "exists in the context and the culture of the school and is grounded in instruction and pedagogy".

It involves assisting members to reach greater awareness and understanding of themselves and their world so it "becomes possible for them to engage in the radical changes necessary for them to overcome the oppressive conditions" (p. 182) of their social reality. The leader initiates and encourages the dialectic discourse needed "to question and challenge the social and political and cultural nature of the schools" (p.190). This self-understanding will enable members of the organization to create a new vision of shared values that will empower them to reformulate their goals and work to redress the injustices that exist within their milieu.

Sergiovanni (1984: 279) shares Smyth's vision of an alternative to traditional leadership theory. His treatment is similar to Smyth's in its values and priorities. The object of leadership is to stimulate the members to question and to come to a new understanding of the meaning of their social condition and then to empower them to act upon these new goals.

Leadership, as seen by all these theorists, is a shared communitarian role involving group members in re-examining their social conditions and raising the followers' consciousness about their social condition to then engage them in social change based on values of equality and freedom. The leader is the visionary that will guide the membership through the process of effecting significant change.

This approach offers a new and different challenge to leaders in the community since the leadership is shared among community members. It promises to be more effective because there is a collective responsibility for building a community that reflects members' own needs and goals. It is also morally more defensible because of the attention given to the needs and goals of members themselves. The more people feel ownership in the process of change, the more collaboration there will be.

Leadership in the classroom

In recent years, the concept of leadership has been re-examined, providing a broader understanding of its score. In the field of education, this new perception of leadership leads us to extend the leadership to encompass not only administrators but also teachers. There has been some literature on teacher-leaders in recent years but much of it focused on teachers leading one another (Lieberman, Saxl, Miles, 1988; Little, 1988). Although this "calls for teachers to take the lead in advancing the understanding and practice of teaching (Little, 1988:82), there is very little writing that examines leadership in the classroom as such. Yet, as Bennis states (1989:4), "whatever your leadership experience, 'the classroom' is a good place to start". According to McIntyre (1991:15), "the leadership experience is not confined to vertical movement through and up the existing pyramidal levels of leadership in education".

Barth (1988:129) sees the "school as a community of leaders" that include not only the teachers and the principals but everyone who is part of it (p. 131). Students as well as parents can become leaders in some ways and at some times. School, for him, "can help all adults and youngsters who are part of them learn how to lead and enjoy the recognition, satisfaction, and influence that comes from serving the common interest as well as one's self-interest" (p. 131). The classroom then becomes a microcosm of the broader organization, operating independently but still affecting the whole organization. It is a microcosm that needs leadership in order to function effectively and to help students learn.

What happens in the classroom can affect the school (Murgatroyd and Gray, 1989:94). By "initiating curriculum changes, creating a new atmosphere" (p. 94), changing teaching strategies, the teacher can be a catalyst for change. "Leadership can thus be a description of the relationship between the teacher's role in the classroom and her role as a classroom teacher within the organization of the school (p. 94). The teacher who experiments in her classroom and evaluates the process is facilitating the personal development of her students (p. 94-95) as well as their learning. One teacher who spoke to Barth (1988:135) expressed it clearly:

> Teachers are leaders every day in dozens of ways. We provide educational direction and create the kind of educational environments we believe in for our students. We work with other teachers to created new curriculum or to consult on problems we have with students. We work with parents in reflecting on their children's development and by providing information about academic matters. We voice matters of concern for ourselves, our colleagues, our students and administrators, and frequently initiate major programmatic changes in our schools.
>
> To assert one's leadership as a teacher, often against forces of administrative resistance, takes commitment to an educational ideal. It requires the energy to combat one's own inertia caused by habit and overwork. And it requires a certain kind of courage to step outside of the small prescribed circle of traditional "teacher tasks," to declare through our actions that we care about and take responsibility for more than the minimum, more than what goes on in the four walls of our classrooms.

The teachers who truly educate their students in the real sense of the word act as leaders. Like leaders who describe themselves as "transformational leaders", they facilitate the students' learning and "encourage participation and share power and information" (Rosener, 1990:120). They also "attempt to enhance other people's sense of self-worth and to energize followers. In general, these leaders believe that people perform best when they feel good about themselves and their work and they try to create situations that contribute to that feeling" (p. 95).

Other educators also see teaching as facilitating students learning and leading them to experience life. Krishnamurti (1985:20-21) states:

> The right kind of education, while encouraging the learning of a technique, should accomplish something which is of far greater importance: it should help man [_sic_] to experience the integrated process of life. It is this experiencing that will put capacity and technique in their right place. If one really has something to say, the very saying of it creates its own style; but learning a style without inward experiencing can only lead to superficiality.

Duvaney and Sykes (1988:19) describe "the new problem solvers" that society is calling on schools to teach:

> [-]Helping students make complex constructions of knowledge
> [-]Requiring students to tackle _ill_-structured problems
> [-]Preparing students to organize and monitor their own learning
> [-]Stoking problem solving with highly specific prior knowledge
> [-]Emphasizing collaborative and situation-specific learning
> [-]Setting students to work on tasks that incorporate skills

Rogers (1988:19) approaches the question of teaching by first defining learning as a significant and meaningful experience. Learning means involving the whole person, not only the cognitive processes of the learner but "the logical _and_ the intuitive, the intellect _and_ the feelings, the concept _and_ the experience, the idea _and_ the meaning. When we learn in that way, we are _whole_, utilizing all our masculine and feminine capacities" (p. 20).

The teacher then becomes a "facilitator of learning" (p. 26), the learner being the center of the educational process. This philosophy is built "on a foundation of the democratic way, empowering each individual" (p. 95) by encouraging them to be responsible for their own learning. The facilitator of this approach "asks questions, such as these, not of self, but of the _students_: 'What do you want to learn? What things puzzle you? What are you curious about? What issues concern you? What problems do you wish you could solve?'" (p. 136). Thus the students have the freedom to guide their own learning and to help each other in their learning.

Freire (1970:67) who believes dialogue between teacher and students to be the basis of education, states that both the teacher and the learner "become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow". He says:

> Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-

> one-who-teaches, but one who is himself [sic] taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach (p. 67).

In this situation, "no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. Men [sic] teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking education are owned by the teacher" (p.67).

The cooperative learning model is a student-centered approach that enables students to learn by interacting among themselves. The teacher then becomes a facilitator and the teacher's role, according to Johnson and Johnson (1986:34), is one of facilitating their learning:

> The teacher structures the learning groups, teaches the basic concepts and strategies, and then monitors the functioning of the learning groups and intervenes to teach collaborative skills and provide task assistance when it is needed. Students are taught to look to their peers for assistance, feedback, reinforcement and support. Students are expected to interact with each other, share ideas and materials, support and encourage academic achievement, orally explain and elaborate the concepts being learned, and hold each other accountable for learning.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986:217) describe the teacher-leader as "a midwife-teacher", one who draws knowledge out of students by assisting "the students in giving birth to their own ideas, in making their own tacit knowledge explicit and elaborating it". Through this process, which they also called connected teaching, the teacher "welcomes the diversity of opinion in class discussion" (p. 223) because each person "has a unique perspective that is in some sense irrefutably right by virtue of its existence" (p. 222). As such the teacher is a facilitator, a midwife who coaches and supports the students' thinking rather than doing the thinking for them; one who assists the students in broadening and building on their own knowledge rather than merely receiving information.

Just as the leader in the transformational model of leadership is the visionary who facilitates the members' work, so is the teacher a facilitator of students' learning. The teacher as described above by various educators has a vision for students and leads the students toward that vision by facilitating their development and growth.

Characteristics of teacher-leaders

Knowing oneself.

Leaders are not trained to be leaders. They simply are leaders because of who they are. Bennis (1990:141) states that "leadership is first being, then doing. Everything the leaders does reflects what he or she is". Leaders are people who have invented themselves, created their own destiny. They have "become the maker of [their] own life" (p. 51). Rogers (1983:33) describes this process as "a struggle to discover our identity, the person we are and choose to be", as the gradual discovery of finding "one's real self" (p. 39).

Krishnamurti (1953: 98) stresses the importance of teachers knowing themselves:

> If we who are the educators do not understand ourselves, if we do not understand our relationship with the child but merely stuff him [_sic_] with information and make him [_sic_] pass examinations, how can we possibly bring about a new kind of education? The pupil is there to be guided and helped; but if the guide, the helper is himself [_sic_] confused and narrow, nationalistic and theory-ridden, then naturally his [_sic_] pupil will be what he [_sic_] is, and education becomes a source of further confusion and strife.

Leaders become more self-aware by reflecting on their experiences. Bennis (1989) mentions that in his conversations with renowned leaders, they all stressed the importance of reflecting on one's own experiences. To free oneself and be oneself through reflection, "one has access to one's soul, to one's imagination, and one can truly reflect on one's experience, and learn from it, and emerge renewed and refreshed" (p. 91).

Self-discovery is a lifetime task, a process in which "persons move away from hiding behind facades and pretences ... toward a greater closeness to, and awareness of, what they are inwardly experiencing" (Rogers, 1983, p. 39). It is to discover "your own native energies and desires, and then to find your own way of acting on them (Bennis:50). Krishnamurti (1953:102) states:

> Surely, the teacher must first begin to see. He [_sic_] must be constantly alert, intensely aware of his [_sic_] own thoughts and feelings, aware of the ways in which he [_sic_] is conditioned, aware of his [_sic_] activities and his [_sic_] responses; for out of this watchfulness comes intelligence, and with it a radical transformation in his [_sic_]

relationship to people and to things.

For Bennis (1989), becoming a leader is to "become yourself, become the maker of your own life" (p. 51).

Vision.

Leaders are people of vision who, having "learned from the past, live in the present with an eye for the future" (Bennis 1989:143). They know where they are going and their goal is to lead others "to a new place and then translate that vision into reality" (p. 192). To succeed it is not a matter of ruling over the followers but sharing with them their vision and their power. In so doing, says Foster (1986:184), "they release the very human potential of the agents in the organization.

Because of their guiding vision and because they know that the problems of life are never fully resolved, leaders persist even in the face of setbacks and failures (Bennis, 1989:39). They learn from failure, they are not afraid to take risks and be innovative, thus paving the way and making real their vision (p. 78). Mistakes for them are "synonymous with growth and progress" (p. 96). The knowledge and understanding gained from mistakes are invaluable. Bennis states:

> There are lessons in everything, and if you are fully deployed, you will learn most of them. Experiences aren't truly yours until you think about them, analyze them, examine them, question them, reflect on them and finally understand them. The point, once again, is to use your experiences

> rather than being used by them, to be the designer, not the design, so that experiences empower rather than imprison.

The vision that leaders have of the future cannot be realized alone. Leadership is an interactive process between the leader and the other group members. By sharing power, by empowering the members, leadership becomes a process of transformation that attempts to change the human condition (Foster, 1986:187). They see themselves as collaborators in the process of change. It is not "manipulating a group to achieve a preset goal; rather it is empowering individuals in order to evaluate what goals are important and what conditions are helpful. The educative use of leadership results in the empowerment of followers" (p. 185-186). Since to succeed, an organization needs the full use of the individuals' potential, it is only by sharing the power and offering opportunities to its members that each one will be able to contribute to their fullest.

In the classroom, the teacher's vision is bound by the context of the curriculum. However, the teacher's vision of the future can influence how the content is presented and the strategies used in guiding the students' learning.

Voice.

If education is to be significant and meaningful to students, then we, as teachers, must understand what learning is all about. According to Rogers (1983:20), the most effective type of learning is what he calls experiential learning. This means the student is personally involved in the learning event in both feeling and cognitive aspects (p. 20). Although the stimulus may come from the outside, the sense of discovery, of understanding comes from within (p. 20). The learning experience becomes meaningful because the whole person is involved. Through the personal experience of learning the student is better able to grasp and comprehend the concepts.

To internalize learning, it is essential that students be encouraged to speak in free and open discussions (Rogers, 1983:14). It is through dialogue that we come into contact with ideas and understand them, thus entering in a relationship with others (Noddings, 1984:77). Freire (1979:81) also stresses the importance of dialogue:

> If it is in speaking their word that men, [_sic_] be naming the world, transform it, dialogue imposes itself as the way by which men [_sic_] achieve significance as men [_sic_]. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity. And since dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized, this dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one person's "depositing" ideas in another.... It is an act of creation.

He adds that "without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education (p. 81).

Belenky et al. (1986) in their study on women's ways of knowing, discovered how important being able to express one's thought was in the development of a strong sense of self. From their interviews they realized that many women did not trust their own thoughts and relied upon knowledge from others rather than knowledge from their own experiences and from their reflections. A woman "needs to know she is capable of intelligent thought, and she needs to know it right away" (p. 193).

The voice is the central force that allows individuals to learn to articulate and then trust their inner thoughts and thus discover themselves. It is therefore vital that in every aspect of education talking and listening, sharing and responding to each other is used as a primary and most important technique of learning.

Caring.

The primary aim of life as stated by Noddings (1984:174) is not pleasure and freedom from pain and trouble but caring and being cared for in the world of humans. Since a primary goal of education is to transform students and prepare them for life the aim of life and the goals of education are inseparable. This is not to say that the development of the intellect and cognitive processes are not important but that the process of education is to develop the whole person (p. 174). If the students can achieve well academically but in the process have not developed any compassion and care for their fellow humans, then we, as teachers, have failed them. The student, says Noddings, "is infinitely more important than the subject" (p. 120).

Heider (1985:133) states that "the common ground of all creation is a greater source of life than any exalted isolation". Life is sustained by compassion, sharing and equality because we are all one and do not live in isolation. Caring for another enhances the harmonious energy of the whole (p. 133).

Caring according to Noddings (1984:14) "is directed to living things". It is a relationship between one-caring and the cared-for in which the other person's nature, ways of life, needs and desire are considered (p. 14). In caring for another, one enhances the other person's life, helping him/her to grow and transform.

Caring comes through a genuine relationship where both people feel free to be themselves, free to share their thoughts. Noddings (1984:20) states that:

> Among the intangibles that I would have my students carry away is the feeling that the subject we have struggled with is both fascinating and boring, significant and silly, fraught with meaning and nonsense, challenging and tedious, and that whatever attitude we take toward it, it will not diminish our regard for each other.

Freire (1979:77) discusses the importance of caring in the transformation of people:

> Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for men [sic]. The naming of the world, which is an act of creation and re-creation, is not possible if it is not infused with love. Love is at the same time the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself.

Rogers (1983:25-26) describes how he discovered the importance of recognizing the students as competent human beings:

> I learned that if I trusted them more as essentially competent human beings, if I was truly myself for them, if I tried to understand them as they felt and perceived themselves from the *inside*, then a constructive process was initiated. They began to develop clearer and deeper self-insights, they began to see what they might do to resolve their distress, and they began to take the actions that made them more independent and that solved some of their problems.

The learning environment, according to Handy (1989:184-185), should be a place of adventure filled with excitement and exploration. In such an environment the students will feel free to be themselves and become involved in their learning. He states:

> That kind of culture cannot be imposed, it can only be encouraged by demonstrations of warmth for all that is good, by celebration, by investment in individuals beyond the bounds of prudence. That kind of encouragement is only possible if one genuinely cares for the people being encouraged (p. 185).

In trusting his students Rogers (1983:26) discovered that the classroom can indeed be an exciting learning place. He found that his students through personal interaction blossomed out as growing human beings (p.26). The benefits were not only to students but also to him:

> Most of all they gave me the courage to be myself more freely, and this led to profound interaction. They told me their feelings, they raised questions I had never thought about. I began to sparkle with emerging ideas that were new and exciting to me, but also, I found, to them (p. 26).

This is the result of sincerely recognizing students as people first, and then giving them space and freedom to learn and grow in a caring environment where interaction between teacher and students is recognized as vital.

Conclusion

Leadership in the classroom has to do with the morality of teaching. Central to teacher-leaders is their recognition of teaching people. They see their role as preparing students for the future by developing the whole child. Their teaching and their relationship with their students is based on caring and consideration for them. Effective teachers may also have moral leadership and be teacher-leaders as described in the literature. However, since the research has been done from the technical perspective of teaching, the findings do not address the moral perspective of leadership.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

This study, interpretive in nature, attempted to understand the experiences of female teacher-leaders and the effect they have in the school community. Individuals base their reality on the meaning that they give to their experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982:33). "Through interpretation, the individual constructs meaning" (p. 33) of his/her reality.

By entering their world, I sought to understand the participants' realities by discovering "what _they_ are experiencing, how _they_ interpret their experiences, and how _they_ themselves structure the social world in which they live" (Psathas, 1973, as cited in Bogdan and Biklen, p. 30). To gather the information and extrapolate meaning from the experiences of these two women, I followed the five guiding principles as found in Bogdan and Biklen (1982:27-28):

1. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument.
2. Qualitative research is descriptive.
3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products. How do people negotiate meaning?
4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.

5. Meaning is of essential concern to the qualitative approach.

It was with this in mind that I entered the world of two female teacher-leaders to see them in action, to hear their voices, to experience their worlds, to feel their realities, and to listen to their stories.

My interest in adolescents stems from my many years of experience teaching at the junior high level. Although early adolescents have a reputation as being difficult to motivate and to discipline, I find them very open, very interesting, and very challenging. They are in the process of transformation, of becoming young, independent adults. They are full of energy and have a passion for life that we as adults often find difficult to understand and to accept.

Adolescents are like travellers leaving on a journey who are examining the contents of their knapsack, which has been packed by someone else, to see if it really contains what they need and what they want[1]. They are in the process of discovering how to be their own persons with the content of their knapsack by re-examining and deciding what they want to keep for their journey of life. And because it is the first time they have looked inside their knapsacks, which until now have been filled by their parents, teachers and society as a whole, they have an immense curiosity to scrutinize each item, question its value, and try it out before deciding if they should keep it or not. All the while they are having a great time carrying out the explorations.

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[1] I owe this original metaphor to J. Kagan.

However, adults tend to be anxious about the curiosity of adolescents and the methods they use to explore. Consequently, adolescents are often misunderstood and often challenge in inappropriate ways the resistance from adults and therefore acquire a reputation for being difficult. Yet, if they sense they are understood and trusted, they will accept the guidance that we, as adults, can provide for them.

It is with this in mind that I decided to choose teachers from the secondary level. I was hoping to gain insights for my own practice in the classroom and my own interaction with young people. I was also hoping to gain some insights into the world of adolescents that would enable me to better understand them and improve my relationships with them. An additional benefit as assistant-principal, this study could also be valuable in assisting the teachers in their own practice: I hope to share with them my insights and my new discoveries about adolescents and about teacher-leaders.

Selection of School

I chose a high school rather than a junior high because I knew the principal in the selected high school. She was well known for her innovative ideas in administration and her success as a leader. Although at the time I was not directly aware of her approach to leadership, I had nevertheless heard impressive reports. Since I was in the process of discovering the concept of leadership in general, and since very little research has been done on teacher-leaders, I had to depend on the principal to identify the teacher-leaders in the school. With her background and her experience, I felt confident that she would be able to identify teacher-leaders in the school. I placed all my trust in her judgment and her concept of teacher-leaders.

That she was a woman was also an asset. My study revolved around women and leadership. I was interested in seeing if women leaders had different perspectives of leadership than what is traditionally accepted. Since she was known for some innovative leadership practice, I thought that involving her would broaden my understanding of leadership. As it turned out, I could not have made a better choice!

Although my experiences had been with only early adolescents, I felt that this study with high school students could nevertheless give me some insights into adolescents in general. There exists some commonalities within all schools and among all people that serve as general guidelines for leaders in any educational environment. What I would discover could easily be modified for a junior high situation.

The selected school is an urban high school in Western Canada with a large population of students from various ethnic backgrounds and from different communities in the city.

Selection of Participants

When asked why she had chosen the particular teachers who were to be the participants, the principal stated that her choice was based on the personality and the integrity of the person, her commitment to the students and to the school, and the influence she had in the school. According to her model of leadership, which she derives from the transformational model of leadership, these two female teachers definitely demonstrated strong leadership in their classroom and in the school. She had been very impressed with their professionalism, their dedication and especially with their rapport with students.

Paula is a pleasant woman in her mid-twenties. She is a modern language teacher and has been teaching for several years at different high schools. It was her third year at this school. She chose teaching because "she loved kids". She enjoys the interaction with people, the challenges and the responsibilities teaching offers. For her teaching is "an exciting job" and she is "proud of being a teacher". Her dedication and her rapport with students certainly attest to her love of teaching.

Pat is an energetic woman in her late twenties who went into education by accident. Her desire to be an author led her to enrol in an Arts program, taking creative writing and English courses. However, since her parents questioned the employment opportunities an Arts degree would give her, she decided to go into education. Her experience in teaching have been so positive she now feels that teaching "has become a little bit more permanent".

Pat is presently employed part-time by choice because she wants to spend some time with her preschooler. However, she says she still spends the greater part of the day at school, by choice. Although she tries to separate home and school, she sometimes finds it difficult to do. During the rehearsals for the year play, she often brings her child to the rehearsals; he enjoys the opportunity to mix with the actors.

Research Design

My first contact with the principal was made just before the Christmas break. At the time, I was still grappling with the details of my study and was not sure how many participants I wanted, nor if I wanted them all from the same school. When I discussed my study with the principal she immediately showed interest. She had one candidate, possibly two. Since she was so enthusiastic about the study, I decided to do my study with two female teachers from the same school. She offered to talk to them and shortly after confirmed that the two candidates had agreed to my request. However, I was not to begin my data collection until mid-February. Due to other time constraints, I told her I would contact both her and the teachers upon my return to University for the second term.

At the first meeting with the two women, I explained the purpose of my study and the strategies I was initially considering. We also discussed the issues of confidentiality and anonymity. We then made a tentative schedule for the observations and the interviews which would begin immediately that week. The interviews with the principal would be scheduled at a later date. A covering letter (Appendix A) stating the conditions of the study and my appreciation for their participation followed.

Data Collection

The Interviews and the observations.

My intention was to gather as much information as possible about Paula and Pat as teacher-leaders. The interviews and the observations allowed me to hear and witness their story as they experienced it. Since leadership implies interaction with group members, I also wanted to get information from those with whom they interacted. I needed to hear the students' voices. Information from the administrators who are in the position of observing the teacher-leaders in the field was also an essential dimension of the story.

The data were collected through a variety of means to provide me with different perspectives on what a teacher-leader is. To gather the different strands of the teachers' stories, I observed them in their classrooms and interviewed them on three occasions. The students provided another perspective by volunteering to answer a questionnaire and through informal conversations. I interviewed the principal, in the presence of each woman, about each one's leadership abilities. I kept a log of my experiences, my insights, and my observations. The two participants also provided me with some personal documents.

Telling one's story to a stranger can be quite intimidating. To assure a relaxed and secure environment for the participants, I let them decide on the place for the interviews. The time of the interviews was determined according to our schedules. Since I would also be observing them in their classroom and during some other activities, the interviews were all done at the school during the noon hour, during some of their "prep" time, or after school. The interviews were all taped and lasted anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour.

Although we had never met, we were able to establish a friendly relationship right from the start. Having previously taught the same subjects they taught, I was able to relate to their experiences in the classroom. I also discovered that one of the women came from a similar background to mine, which enabled us to share some of our life experiences. As the study proceeded, I shared with them my excitement about the discoveries I was making and explained the process of analysis I was using to extract meaning from their stories. This gave them a better understanding of their involvement in my study, a clearer picture of the value and the meaning of their experiences and of the importance of my hearing their stories.

Each participant was interviewed about her experiences in teaching, her role in the school and her relationship with the students, her colleagues and the administrators. I had formulated some questions to serve as a guide for the first interview but did not rely totally on the prepared questions. The interviews were transcribed and the content analyzed for further questions which were then used in subsequent interviews. These provided me with the basic information about their stories.

I observed both teachers in their classes on three different occasions. I sat at the back of the classroom and made notes on their relationships with the students as they came into class, during the lesson and after class. I observed their teaching strategies and the students' reactions to them. I also kept fieldnotes about my observations.

Both teachers had already told their students about my study and the role each of them was playing in it. In the class, I tried to make my presence as inconspicuous as I could so as to create the least possible disruptions. Some of the students greeted me and others occasionally turned around to see what I was doing or to note my reaction to some particularly amusing incidents. On one occasion, a girl refused to tell everyone a joke because I was there. She did share it with the teacher who groaned upon hearing it. In each class, when talking with the students, one of the boys questioned why I had limited my study to women only. Although the students accepted my explanation, I'm not sure all of them agreed with it. I nevertheless felt accepted and it helped me to feel more at ease.

The students' participation.

By volunteering to share with me their thoughts, the students were able to contribute significantly to my study. Their voices allowed me to cross-check the data I had collected from the two participants. The teachers, by agreeing to give the questionnaire to their students, placed themselves in an vulnerable position. On the day the students were to answer the questionnaires, one of the teacher mentioned her concern about one group. At their previous class she unfortunately had to reprimand them and she was wondering how cooperative they would be and what their comments would be. I suggested we postpone the activity but she refused. As it turned out, the responses were very positive.

The students in two of Paula's classes and one of Pat's class were given a questionnaire concerning the effect of the two teachers on the students' school experiences. They were asked questions concerning the participants' teaching strategies that helped them to learn, their feelings about being in her class, what they like and didn't like about her classes, and what they learned about themselves in their class. They were also asked to comment on how different these classes were from other classes and about Paula's and Pat's contributions to the school. Copies of the questionnaire for the students and the questions used in the informal conversations are included in Appendix B.

Paula asked the students to answer the questionnaire if they wished. She told them that she would read through the questionnaires and she would then pass them on to me for my research. When they were finished, she invited those who wanted to hand it in to do so. She read through the questionnaire before handing them over to me. It was understood she could withhold any questionnaire she wished to retain. However, all questionnaires were handed over to me. The answers were compiled according to the questions asked and then returned to the teacher. The answers to the questionnaire were analyzed and more questions were formulated from the data for one of the interviews with the participants.

Paula offered to invite some of the girls of the basketball team she coached to chat with me. We met in her classroom while Paula took her class to the laboratory. I had prepared some questions to guide the discussion. The girls talked about their experiences with her during the basketball season. Notes from this encounter were summarized and shown to the teacher.

Paula also gave me evaluation forms titled "Student perception of teacher performance" answered by her students from the previous year. All the responses were very positive and described her just as her current students did on the questionnaire. With two of her classes she discussed the concept of leadership and the attributes of effective leadership. Notes from those discussion were given to me. She also gave me copies of other personal documents.

In her class, Pat followed the same procedure as Paula to get the students' input on the questionnaire. After they had handed in their questionnaire, she asked them if they had any questions for me. This evolved into an animated discussion. At Pat's suggestion, all the students gathered around me to talk openly and freely about Pat, who was sitting among them. During this informal discussion based on the questions they had just answered, I allowed the conversation to flow freely and only occasionally probed for clarification. Although Pat was rather shy about the praise they were giving her, the students themselves were all attentive, and showed their agreement on what was being said by smiling or nodding or interjecting whenever they could.

I was also permitted to talk informally to some of the students in the school year play. I attended a rehearsal during which some of the students volunteered to share with me their experiences of putting on a play with Pat. Notes from these conversations were summarized and shown to the teacher. The ethical issues concerning this will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The interview with Lori and each participant.

I had one joint interview with the principal and each participant. The purpose of this interview was to get information and insights about the effect of teacher-leaders on the school community and on the administrators. The participants were asked to attend the interviews in order to respect the teachers' code of ethics.

The principal has the position of designated leader in a school and as such should be aware of the teachers' effect on the school community. Through her observations of the teachers, her interaction with them, and the feedback she receives from other members of the school community, she is able to form some opinion about their abilities as leaders. In these two interviews, I wanted to find out why she had chosen these two women and gather some information about her concept of leadership and assist me to understand and define the term teacher-leader.

A copy of the transcripts of the interviews were given to the participant to verify for content. The interviews were then analyzed to extract the reality of the teacher-leader as seen from the administrator's perspective.

Data Analysis

Transcribing the information from the interviews is an enormous, time-consuming task. However, I chose to transcribe the interviews myself and have found that the process of transcribing provided me with the opportunity to start analyzing and extracting meaning from the data. It allowed me to listen attentively to the interviews and later, during the readings of the transcripts, I could hear the participants tell their stories all over again.

To extract meaning from the data, I read through the interview transcripts on various occasions during the study. Throughout the reading, I developed a preliminary list of coding categories which I studied for patterns, associations and possible themes. I would then put it aside for a few days before studying it again. I read through the data a second time and manipulated again the list of categories from which emerged a number of themes.

I compiled the answers to the student questionnaires. After reading through them, I developed a preliminary list of categories. I marked the frequency with which each category appeared in the questionnaire. This procedure was repeated with the summarized notes of the informal conversations with the girls from the volleyball team and the students in the year play.

I then cross-checked all the information from all sources to detect any inconsistencies. However, I could not discover any and was amazed at how closely related the responses were. In some cases, the students and the teachers used the same words and the same expressions to tell their respective sides of the stories. This helped to confirm the authenticity of the data. Several similar categories and themes emerged from all the various sources.

The findings of the study are expressed in a narrative form to give the reader a feeling of the participants daily experiences in the school setting. The contents of the narrative are then analyzed and presented in essay form.

Establishing trustworthiness

In qualitative research, the data collection is very different from that of positivist research. In an interpretive study, it is acknowledged that the researcher is personally involved. The data consist not only of the participant's story but also the researcher's perspective on the participant's environment and actions. Together they form an integral whole from which meaning and interpretation are inferred. Therefore, in a qualitative study, assuring reliability and validity is a different process from that in a quantitative study.

In qualitative research, the term trustworthiness comprehends the positivistic notions of "reliability" and "validity". Four aspects, as defined and explained by Guba and Lincoln (1982), are the basis of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility means that the researcher has represented the multiple realities in such a way that the constructors can identify their realities. To assure credibility the participants received a copy of the transcripts of their interviews for verification, corrections and elaborations. Upon analysis of the data they were again provided with a copy of the chapters relevant to their contributions. I then discussed the interpretations with them.

In addition, the findings were also discussed with other teacher-leaders to see if the ideas had meaning for them. I also sought a male point of view to see if a male teacher's experiences and his perceptions of education corresponded with the two teacher-leaders' experiences and perspectives. The fieldnotes, the transcripts and the researcher's log will provide multiple examples to verify the analysis.

Transferability is the degree to which the findings of one inquiry may be applied to other situations. Transferability is established through purposeful sampling. The principal I approached is recognized for her leadership skills. I therefore felt confident that the participants she would select would be suitable. There is also a "thick description" of the study which includes transcripts of interviews, description of the participants, of the school, and of the activities observed and the documents collected that future researchers can access.

It is important that the researcher address the issues of dependability and confirmability. Dependability is the degree to which the findings might be reproduced. Confirmability is the degree to which the findings of the study are functions of the participants and not biases of the researcher. I used the technique of triangulation to establish confirmability. Information was collected from the teachers through interviews, observations of their interactions with students and colleagues, and personal relevant documents they shared with me. The students' questionnaire also offered valuable information.

I also established an audit trail which consists of fieldnotes, notes of the analysis and personal reflections on the study. This will serve to identify and minimize any biases that I might have.

Trustworthiness was therefore established by triangulation: interviews with the teacher-leaders and the principal, surveys from their students, discussions with students, members of the drama club, and the basketball team, observations in the classroom and during school activities, and fieldnotes.

Ethical considerations

I met with the participants to explain the purpose of the study. They were told that their participation was voluntary and that they could opt out anytime. It was also their prerogative to refuse to answer any of the questions. A consent form was signed at the first meeting.

They received a copy of the transcript of each interview to verify the contents and make any corrections that needed to be made. They were informed that the information was to be used in an assignment and for my study. They received a copy of the relevant chapters upon completion.

The participants were also informed of the confidentiality of all information obtained and that their identities would be protected as much as possible by changing their names and some of the references that do not alter the significance or the meaning of the study. One of the participants is referred to as Paula and the other as Pat. Both names Paula and Pat were chosen for their important significance to me. The name Paula symbolizes the principal who believed and encouraged me in all my initiatives and entrusted me with an administrative position. It was through his mentorship that I discovered my qualities as a leader. And the name Pat represents a great friend who has journeyed with me as a sister, a friend, and an educator. The principal's name, Lori, symbolizes my husband who was also very significant in helping me develop my leadership skills.

Understanding the setting

There is an uneasiness, a sense of intrusion about entering a school to do a study. A sense of invasion of privacy. After all, not only do the study participants open themselves to scrutiny but so does the whole micro-community within the school. The researcher attempts to discover the climate of the school without attracting undue attention and without disturbing the normal everyday routine. The experience can be rewarding and enriching or a nightmare that never seems to end. At Rosewood School, the experience was indeed rewarding.

Rosewood School is an urban high school in Western Canada. Whenever I went, there seemed to be pockets of students gathered in the hallway, working together or just chatting. Eventually some of them greeted me when they met me in the hallway. At the office, I was always greeted by the secretary, a very friendly and pleasant woman.

In the staffroom, there are round tables scattered throughout allowing the teaching and support staff the opportunity to mix. One large section of the bulletin board contains all the belief statements of the teachers in the school: an expression of their basic educational philosophy. On another wall is a large white board to write notes, greetings, congratulations to the teachers.

The atmosphere in the staffroom is friendly and relaxed. People acknowledge each other's presence. There is laughter, bantering and chatting. Sometimes teachers share with each other their experiences or their concerns relating to teaching. There is a feeling of understanding and support. It's an environment where one feels accepted and respected.

Meeting Lori

I had met the principal, Lori, on a previous occasion. She had stopped at my school, along with the members of the Students' Council from her school, on their way home from a weekend retreat in our part of the province. They had spent the weekend examining the concept of leadership and she had previously arranged, through our principal, this brief exchange between the members of her Students' Council and mine.

At this meeting, my first impression was one of a very dynamic person committed to education. She had spent the weekend taking the junior high students camping to give them an experience in leadership. She talked positively of her students. In the little time I had to get acquainted with her, I felt a sense of urgency in her voice, as if there were never enough minutes in an hour to accomplish all the things that raced through her mind.

When I contacted her, I wasn't sure she would remember me and even wondered how accurate my first impression had been. Given these doubts, I procrastinated a few days, then silenced the reservations I had and called her.

When I introduced myself, she immediately recalled my name and inquired about the occasion when we had met. Having recalled the situation, I explained to her the purpose of my call, described my study on female classroom leaders and asked if she had any female teacher-leaders in her school I could interview for my research. There was no hesitation! She seemed enthusiastic about the opportunity and offered to talk to two of her teachers. She soon called back to confirm that indeed the two women were willing to participate. As this was just before the winter break, I told her I would be in contact with her at a later date for a meeting with her and the participants.

In my subsequent encounters with Lori, I had many opportunities to observe her with her staff and talk with her. I discovered that my initial impression was fairly accurate. She was indeed very busy. However, underneath this sense of urgency is a belief in people. She explained her model of leadership as one of empowering people, of developing the potential of everyone and thus creating a community of committed individuals dedicated to leading youth into adulthood. This was apparent in her relationship with those around her whom she treated with respect.

Lori explains that her concept of education comes from the latin word "educere" which means to lead out. For her, the sign of any educator is that they draw students out, they lead students to develop the gifts that they have.

For Lori "the job of a leader" in the school is to have a vision of a school where the students and the staff are happy and where there is an expectation of productivity. The more teacher-leaders a school has, the more outstanding the school. This is seen as very important for community building in the school, for excellence, for developing leadership among the students.

She explained the vision she has for her school:

> First, that we build a community in the school. Secondly, that we strive for excellence among the staff, the support staff and the students and we all use the gifts we have and thirdly, that we promote leadership among the staff and the students.

The study participants enjoyed working with her and talked about the support she gave them in the classroom and in their activities. She trusted them and encouraged them in all their initiatives.

CHAPTER IV

The Teacher-Leaders Speak

Lori and the teacher-leaders

When I arrived at the school for my appointment with the two teacher-leaders and Lori, the students had just been dismissed and the hallways were buzzing with activities. I made my way through the hallway, following the large "OFFICE" sign, stopping here and there to wait my turn in the sea of students who ignored me. Everybody went their way and didn't seem to be concerned with the stranger in their midst. At one point, one young woman noticed me waiting to find a passage through, smiled, and let me through.

I found the office and was immediately greeted by the secretary who asked if she could help me. I told her I was there to meet with Lori. She called the principal's office to announce my arrival and then offered me a chair.

The office was busy with end-of-the-day activities. Students came in and out to buy their bus passes, teachers were passing through, stopping for a brief moment to inquire about messages or to pick up materials. I observed the whole scene, and when I spotted female teachers, I played the mental guessing game of trying to pick the participants from among those who passed through. As it turned out, one of the women I had observed speaking with a student was indeed one of the participants. She came, shortly after, to greet me and accompany me to the staffroom where she offered me a cup of coffee.

Paula is a pleasant, young woman in her mid-twenties with five years experience in two different schools. I found her to be soft-spoken and reserved. Her students, however, described her as a funny and dynamic person.

Pat is a tall woman in her late twenties. Lori had some difficulty locating her but she finally showed up, out of breath, apologetic because she had forgotten and explained that she had been with the drama club rehearsing for the year play. She smiled, we introduced ourselves, and we shook hands, a firm handshake.

I instantly liked both of them. Pat talked and laughed at the same time, revealing a "life is wonderful" attitude. Although Paula was more reserved and quiet, her eyes reflected a dynamic personality and I also felt very much at ease in her presence. I explained to them the purpose of my study. They were both very interested, but a little sceptical about having been chosen as teacher-leaders, each in turn commenting seriously: "I don't know about being a leader!"

They nevertheless agreed and we set tentative dates for the observations and interviews. I left feeling exuberant!

What follows is a composite of selected bits and pieces from my interviews, my fieldnotes, my observations during class and activities, and from the students' questionnaires to create a mosaic that is representative of "a day in the life of Paula" and "a day in the life of Pat".

Getting to know Paula

When Paula arrives at school, there are students waiting at the door of her classroom to chat with her. She greets them and takes time to listen to them and exchange a few words. Her classroom is now open to any student who wishes to come in and will remain open throughout the day whenever she is free. The bell rings. It's time to begin the classes.

She stands at the door and cheerfully greets the students as they come into her class, occasionally joking or commenting with a student. This is part of her daily ritual with each class that comes to her.

In the classroom, the desks are placed along the side wall, leaving a considerable amount of space in front for movement. The bulletin boards are covered with posters and pictures relevant to the learning of a language. Students' work is displayed above and below the blackboard, on the door, on the walls. Facing the rows of desks is Paula's desk and next to it is a long table, covered with materials. A VCR is in the far corner of the room.

The students chat among themselves as they come in and settle into their places. Paula greets the group and takes a few minutes for some informal chitchatting and friendly bantering. The students joke and laugh with her. She then proceeds to write the objectives of the day's lesson on the board. When the students groan, she explains that, yes, this is not the most exciting part of the course, that it has a reputation of being boring but that it is essential and, therefore, she will try to make it as interesting as she can.

Throughout the lesson, she walks back and forth in front of the class and to and from the blackboard, thus trying to connect with each one of the students. She teaches the concept "une reaction personnelle," by engaging the students in a discussion on a recent local event. To encourage the students to think and express their ideas on the situation, she plays the devil's advocate, reminding them that this is only a role that she is assuming to help them probe their thoughts. The students take up the challenge and participate in the discussion, bringing up their points of view and defending them.

Occasionally, when Paula feels the tension mounting or the apathy settling in, she brings in some humor or relates a personal anecdote relevant to the lesson. Before the end of the class, she takes time to give them the plan for the test they will be writing on the following Monday, identifying for them the chapters and the important section that should be studied. When the bell rings at the end of the class, she goes out into the hallway once again to mingle and chat with the students, another part of the daily ritual with each class.

At noon, Paula, as co-chair of the graduation committee, attends a meeting of a sub-committee. The students greet her and some inquire about her recent skiing trip with the students. They gradually sit down and the meeting starts.

The students are responsible for all the decisions. In her quiet and calm manner, she guides them through the decisions, bringing up points to consider. Before accepting their decisions, she inquires to verify that everybody agrees. There is a lot of laughter and joking and she gently brings them back to the serious matter of the meeting. She schedules a practice time and place for rehearsal. Another meeting ends and she can now go for lunch.

She quickly eats lunch in the staffroom where she mixes with colleagues and then leaves to spend time talking with the students in the hallway. Some members of the basketball team come to discuss last night's game with her. They are a little down and she reassures them. With a group of boys she talks about hockey and the chances of their favorite team getting to the finals. She notices one of her students standing alone, approaches him and discusses golfing with him. He is an avid fan of golfing and although she has little interest in the sport, she has made it a point to learn something about it so as to create a link with him.

The afternoon bell rings. Another round of classes begins. She is somewhat tired and tells her students that her energy is waning. The students understand and cooperate with her. In her second class, the students work in groups getting ready to present their project to the class the following day. In the middle of the last class, she notices the tension rising and changes her plan to allow for a change in pace. She gives them the last five minutes to relax. The bells rings, classes are over but for Paula there is now basketball practice.

In the gym, she gathers the girls around and ask them to write down what they thought of last night's game: how they played, what strategies worked, which ones didn't. She then picks these up and uses them to guide the practice, being careful not to reveal the identity of the writer. Together they discuss strategies and consider everyone's suggestions. In the end she allows them to decide on the strategies they want to try out. "It's your game," she says, "your responsibility. If you want to try it that way, we'll go for it. If it works, so much the better. If it doesn't, then we will have to refocus."

The practice goes well. Whenever someone makes a mistakes or fouls up, Paula encourages her to keep on trying. She joins in and gets involved. The ball comes to her, she attempts to catch it, and it goes out of bounds. This is all part of the practice. At five o'clock, she dismisses them. She can now go home. On her way out, she meets one of the school's custodians, smiles at her, greets her and inquires about her holiday. After supper, she will spend part of the evening doing some marking at home.

Getting to know Pat

Because Pat teaches part time, she arrives at school during the first class. As she makes her way to the staffroom, she talks to the students she meets in the hallway about last night's hockey game or music or some interesting discovery she made about one of the students. No sooner does the staffroom door close behind her, than someone knocks and it's for her. Rehearsals for the year play have started and with a group of 45 cast and crew members, she is often consulted on one matter or another. Two students need advice on the props. Together, they discuss the situation and come to a decision.

It is time for her first class. Some students are waiting for her at the door. She opens her door and as they enter, they talk with her, joke, and laugh. This personal and friendly bantering and teasing continues as the other students come in and gradually settle down in their seats. She chats and laughs with the students as she hands out the papers for the lesson. This is a moment to build rapport.

When she is ready to start, she asks the students for their attention, tolerating the minute it takes, answering the odd question and thanking them when they quiet down. During the past two weeks, the students have worked in pairs on a project and are now ready to present their report to the class. She calls on two students to begin.

During the presentation, she sits on a front desk, elbows on her knees and follows attentively. At one point, she requests permission to ask a question, which is granted. Some students give their points of view and she accepts their comments, encouraging them to elaborate. Throughout the presentation, the students continue to discuss and she challenges them with questions or comments of her own. When the group finishes, she applauds them, praising them for a "job well done". One more group has time to present its report before the bell rings.

The next class is more passive and needs more structure. Consequently, on the overhead she has outlined the lesson and has indicated beside each point the page number that will guide the students during the discussion. She walks around the side of the class, talks with a strong voice, asks questions, nods and acknowledges them when they respond or comment. One of the students disagrees with her. She discusses the point with him and accepts the answer, stressing that it's another way of looking at it. She notices a couple of students talking in the corner at the back and brings them back to task by quietly calling out and pausing momentarily. The students quiet down.

The bell rings. After class, five students remain behind to discuss some part of the story. She stays and discusses with them, giving them her full attention. She later explains that some students feel intimidated about speaking in the class and so she gives them time after class to answer their questions.

At noon, the Students' Council has organized a box social and Pat has brought her picnic basket for the bidding. Only one other teacher is participating. One of the boys buys her lunch basket and invites her to join him in the middle of the gym floor to share it. She concedes and has "a great time eating lunch with the student". After lunch she returns to her classroom which she has offered as "an extension of the library for students who want to work in groups during the noon hour". Five boys come to work on their math assignment. A couple of girls come in and talk for a while with her. She leaves the room to see another colleague. In the hallway she greets the students she meets, teasing one about the tan he has just acquired on his last skiing trip. The student chuckles, obviously enjoying the attention.

Right after lunch, she has a prep. During her preps, she always leaves her door open for any students who might want to work in her room or chat with her. Today, some boys come in, chat a bit with her and then settle into two groups to work together. They take the ghettoblaster she keeps in her class and turn it on to their favorite station. Pat sits in a student desk and works on some essays. At different intervals, different students come in to discuss an assignment they have to do. For every one of them she takes time to answer questions and reassures them when they have some reservations about the assignment.

After school, Pat has a year-play rehearsal. When she arrives backstage, the students are all waiting for her. Some are sitting in the seats, four or five are having fun playing out some silly roles. She attempts to start but a student points out that the main character has not arrived yet. She decides to wait but reminds them that they will have to give some extra time at the end of the rehearsal. Meanwhile, the "clowns" in front keep joking around and everyone joins in with their comments, their teasing or their chuckles. Pat joins in the laughter and the bantering.

She begins the rehearsal with an energetic pep talk that gets the players going. She spurs them on, encouraging them to have fun on the stage, relating how one of them did it "so beautifully" last practice. Following the pep talk, they get into the costumes, some of them just trying them on for the first time. This brings up more laughter and Pat joins in commenting on their "new attire" and the suitability for the role.

"We start with Act 3!" Amid the commotion and the momentary confusion of who goes on, the players somehow manage to make their way to the front of the stage. The rehearsal begins, Pat sits on a bench and occasionally coaches them, and laughs with them every time they get confused and try something different. Two crew members come in carrying part of the wall and inquire about its suitability as a prop. She praises them and they proceed to put it up amid the on-going scene.

She nevertheless keeps the practice going at a steady pace, having them repeat the same scene a number of times in spite of their reluctance. Shortly after five o'clock, she reminds them of the presentations the following week and of their responsibility to make the play a success. On Sunday, they will meet all day to practice.

Understanding the Teacher-Leader

In describing a day in the life of each participant, it becomes evident that there are similarities in their thinking and their approach to education. In this section I shall explore two themes that have emerged in the data. The first theme, "the teachers' philosophy," reflects the teachers' perception of education and their approach to teaching. The second theme, "the ambience and teaching strategies," describes their praxis

Since the two women's philosophies and their praxis of teaching were very similar and differed only in minor points, I have chosen to present their philosophies as one, using quotations from each participant. I have also identified the minor difference between them. The quotations come directly from the data and have been edited only for clarity.

Teaching is Leading

The teachers' philosophy.

Our behavior is motivated by our perception of ourselves, the world around us, and of humankind. What we do, and how we do things comes from our fundamental beliefs in who we are and how we perceive others. Underlying the pedagogical approach to teaching is the teacher's philosophical perception of education. Although teachers frequently may be unaware of their philosophy, it can be perceived from a number of sources: their conversations, their relationships with students, their teaching strategies.

Both Paula and Pat have a holistic, student-centered approach to education. Teaching does not mean simply giving information to students on the novels they read or giving them the linguistic structures of a language. It is much more than that. It involves helping them grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually by teaching them learning skills, lifeskills, and values through the medium of the curriculum. It means being a facilitator rather than a lecturer in the classroom. The holistic, student-centered approach reflects the perception they have of students.

Caring for the students.

The students, whom they consider as people first and then students, are central to their pedagogy. For both women, the students have to be respected in the same way adults are respected.

> I approach them as people first. I always call them young adults. I joke with them. I greet them at the door. (Paula)
>
> There is no way you can expect a child to respect you unless you've shown some respect for that child. And you've earned that respect. Respect is not something that can be demanded. It must be earned. And you can't do that by going out there and being Attila the Hun. (Pat)

This respectful attitude is reflected in all aspects of their relationships with the students, be it in the classroom, in the hallways, or during an activity.

Both teachers have created a safe environment for their students, letting them participate when they feel like it and enforcing one rule, that of respecting the others. Neither of them will tolerate put-downs by other students to the point of asking a student guilty of it to leave the class if need be.

For the student, the respect is especially important when there is a conflict or a problem. In those situations, Paula and Pat will politely ask the student to remain after class to discuss it privately and to allow the student to be part of the solution:

> This is [the behavior] I have observed and this is what happens [because of it]. This is how I feel and I do not appreciate it. What do you think should be done? (Paula)
>
> So often I will just tell them that whatever their behavior was at the time, that it was not appropriate or I misunderstood it. So I ask them to explain the situation to me and this is done in private. (Pat)

For both Pat and Paula, teaching means establishing relationship with the students. They will take every available opportunity to talk to the students outside class and will take a personal interest in them. Paula explains why it's so important.

> Basically I like people. They keep me young at heart. They're fun to be with. I like to laugh with them. I find that it establishes a different kind of respect in the classroom. It shows them I respect them as

> people first and then as students. I can't function in a classroom where I don't relate to them, where I can't reach them. I like to get to know them a little bit outside the classroom so that I can use them as examples in my lessons if I'm teaching a concept.

Pat expresses it in somewhat different terms:

> When you do show interests in them as a person, it goes beyond the classroom. So if they do have a problem with their work or in general, you are approachable.

Values are central to our choices and to decisions we make. They form the base for our ethical conduct. Students have an inner desire to do well and to succeed with others. They understand that society's expectations of their behavior reflect acceptable norms about appropriate conduct. How they perceive their life in their environment, their relationship with others, their contribution to society will depend on their value systems. Those values will influence their decisions.

Pat and Paula both believe that the students' sense of values is very important and is a prime concern in education. Paula explains it this way.

> Respect, dignity, integrity. They are so abstract but those are some of the values I want them to leave with. Some dignity, some self worth, self-reliability, responsibility. I think that the most important things to leave school with is the values that they can't really assess, but will help them work well with others.

Above all, they want their students to recognize themselves as unique and to love themselves. Before every report card, Paula tells them not to compare themselves with others but to compete with themselves: "Compare yourself to yourself. See if you have made any progress. We are all different."

Pat explained that if anything else, she wants her students to learn to be kind to each other:

> Students must be taught compassion and fairness. If I don't teach them anything else in English, I'd like to teach them that it pays off to be kind, that we have to be kind. I do that through examples....
>
> Most of the classes that I have realize that the first thing I expect from them is that they are kind. I really strive for a safe environment so that the students are not afraid to speak out, or dramatize. Even if they do put themselves on the line, everybody else in the class will support them. They won't be laughed at or mocked. They must be supportive.

This allows them to be respected and to respect others and consequently helps them develop friendships, which is an essential ingredient to enjoying life. This gives them dignity and self-respect that is so important for adolescents.

Empowering the students.

Included in their philosophy of learning is a belief in the dual role of the teacher and the learner as both teacher and learner. Paula and Pat do not consider themselves to be the sole teachers in the classroom, but recognized that everyone has something to offer. Pat is delighted with the opportunity to learn from her students. She feels they have the same ability she has to discover meaning in the literature. Her comments at different times during the interview confirmed that:

> I want them to learn from each other.
>
> I'm not the only teacher in the class.
>
> I'm being taught by students. I'm being challenged by people.
>
> And that's what the students teach me. Not everything is black and white in literature. There is a lot of grey in between. That's very exciting.

For Paula, teaching and learning is "a communicative process" to which both the teacher and the learner contribute. From her students, through the interaction in and out the classroom, she gets to know them on a more personal level which helps her to understand them and make her teaching more relevant to the students:

> They teach me about innocence and that they are still [innocent]. They teach me about issues that concern them, about the experiences they go through everyday, their emotional, physical state and how sensitive you've got to be to them. They teach me about the kinds of things that are going on in their daily lives, be it the music, the TV programs. What is important to them. And also how to relate to them.

As a result, both the teacher and the learner are intertwined in the process of learning and teaching in which everyone grows.

Like good leaders, the study participants believe in empowering their students to become responsible citizens. This means the acquisition of life-skills which will benefit the students throughout their lives. To this effect Pat states:

> They have to learn themselves because otherwise when they're adults and they will no longer be in a school situation, how do they make decisions, how do they continue to learn?

Not only is decision making important to these teachers, but also working together in harmony.

> They work together because they have to be with people for the rest of their lives, and so it's important that they learn to interact with other people as far as working is concerned. (Paula)
>
> When you work with somebody else you learn to give and take. (Pat)
>
> When you have two leaders battling over something you should still be able to resolve it because you are teaching people as well to give and take. That's the reality of the world, to live in harmony. (Pat)

Learning is an "interactive process". Paula describes why interaction among students is very important:

> Learning is interactive teaching. Taking an active role in expanding your knowledge in all the senses. As a student I was a sponge.

> "Okay, this is what I said. Take it in and memorize it." For me that was the most boring way of learning. When I actually got into it and I put myself into it, then learning was fun. I liked it because I was part of it.

She strives to give the same experience to her students and consequently will give them projects to do, be it presentations, skits, or group discussions. She will give them guidelines to help them make choices but ultimately they have some decisions in their activities.

Pat also challenges her students by giving them projects, oral presentations, or dramatizations to do. She had the students in one of her English classes pair off to prepare presentations on the novel of Jane Eyre. In another class they created a rap song of Beowulf. And for others it was re-writing Beowulf in a comic format. These are all activities that require sharing ideas and working together.

Essential to the teacher-leader is the sharing of ideas in discussions. As oppose to traditional teaching, where the teacher lectures to the students and silences their voice, Paula and Pat give the students a strong voice.

In Pat's class, the students are encouraged to comment, to disagree, or to challenge the ideas presented. Some participate by asking questions or by commenting. The students respond to each other. She observes and allows the discussion to flow freely. Occasionally, she interjects with a question or with an explanation of a symbol. In other instances, she dramatizes, uses an analogy or imagines a scenario to clarify a point. When she gives an opinion, the student will sometimes challenge her. She explains her position but also accepts that of the student. This is very important, as she explains:

> I encourage it. I wholeheartedly encourage it and I encourage it right from the beginning of the year that I am not the guru of English, the god of English.

She further explains that she tells them "not to accept everything that is given to them lightly". She feels rewarded when they do:

> I feel great they're actually taking the occasion I'm giving them and exercising it and they're able to say "But wait, I don't see it that way!".

In her classes, Paula will find controversial topics of interest to the students to discuss in French. Often, to capture their attention, she will take a current topic from the local news. During these oral discussions, she likes to play the devil's advocate to challenge their ideas, being careful to warn them when she assumes the role, lest they feel threatened.

This collegial class atmosphere allows for a positive, stimulating interaction among the students and the teacher. There is serious discussions, moments of laughter, stimulation for thought. On one occasion, one student offered an explanation for Jane Eyre's behavior, at which Pat and the students laughingly disagreed. The student laughed with them. It was all part of belonging to this community created by discovering and sharing their discoveries.

Expressing creativity.

The teacher's understanding of learning is very important for it will determine the teacher's approach to teaching and facilitate the student's learning. For both Paula and Pat, the essence of learning is "learning how to learn". It's an on-going process that occurs in all aspects of life through the experience of discovery and creativity.

To learn and to grow is to discover the world around us. Discovery occurs best in an open climate where there is freedom for discovery and creativity. Both Paula and Pat like to plan activities that stimulate creativity in the students. In Pat's story about the students' creation of Beowulf into a modern rap song that they later performed for parents and teachers, she states:

> They don't realize they are learning by doing that exercise. [In so doing] they have more of a grasp of what [Beowulf] means than if I had stood in front of the class and told them what it means.

Although her lessons follow a certain routine Paula makes her lessons interesting by varying her approach:

> There is a line of predictability as far as my courses go. We'll say hello and talk a little bit in French. Then we will mark the

> homework, then we'll go to the new concept, be it grammatical, communicative, written, or oral. I have a closure at the end of my class, and then I'll give them some time to work in class. That is a routine. But they don't know what to expect, what it is we are going to be taking or how I'm going to approach it. They know I'm going to approach it in a different way.

To make it more interesting, she takes a lot of risks and expresses her own creativity by trying out a variety of techniques. It can be a song she makes up on the spur of the moment to explain a word or an acronym to remember a rule about the verbs or she will relate a personal anecdote from one of her travels to make the concept more interesting. She is not afraid "to act silly" in class. It keeps the students interested and she's having fun.

To encourage her students when they are doing projects, Paula awards bonus points whenever there is evidence of originality. This could be as simple as having brought something from home to enhance it.

Learning should be meaningful and significant to the individual. Therefore what they learn in class should be interesting for the students and relevant to their lives. To accomplish these goals, Pat explores the themes in the stories that are still relevant to today's youth. For example, when planning the teaching of the novel Jane Eyre, she explains her thought processes:

> What was it like then? What are some of the common themes we're still struggling with? We have some continuity there, so that it

> isn't just Jane Eyre. So they can identify with the issues. There's a little bit of romance, so you have to build on that. And the supernatural they enjoy, so you have to be sure they are aware of the supernatural connection.

She is also concerned about addressing contemporary social issues that surface in the literature. The novel Jane Eyre offers the opportunity to discuss gender issues. When I inquired about the issue of sexual discrimination that she brought to the attention of the students, she replied:

> The reason I do that is because those issues are still here today and very strong today. There is something that continues. It didn't end with the right to vote.

This provided her with the opportunity to discuss the gender issue from a historical perspective and to link it to today's situation.

For Paula, teaching a modern language means to bring it alive to the students. Therefore her teaching strategies involve a variety of techniques to make the language a vibrant one, an exciting one that the students will relate to. That is why she often relates some personal anecdotes or everyday stories to explain a concept or to explain part of the culture. She also uses a lot of humor. To explain the vocabulary, she will use body language, gestures, or even a song.

She also believes that learning a language is not just to speak it. The language is "something alive", part of a culture. It then becomes essential for her "to teach them tolerance of cultures and appreciation of them".

Giving the students the opportunity to talk with their colleagues in a safe environment on issues and topics that are relevant to them helps the students develop an emerging consciousness of the world around them. That is an important goal of education and can only be reached by giving a strong voice to the students.

Both Paula and Pat also talked of the importance of valuing the students' creativity. Sharing their personal work was encouraged. This was evident in both classrooms when the students presented the reports they had prepared and discussed them with their classmates. Paula explains how displaying the students' works makes them feel important. Pat agrees and explained why she often posted individual student's work on the bulletin board:

> It's not valuable if you write an essay and you're the only one that's going to read it, if you don't have an audience for your paper.

Extra-curricular activities provide a unique opportunities to teachers to interact with the students. Both women are involved in extra-curricular activities. Paula does it because she enjoys it.

> I love doing it. Just to see the students develop at which ever point they are, to help them develop, to see the end result at the end of the season is enough for me. I'm so proud that I've helped them develop not just as players but as people. It's just so

> motivating for me.

Pat, although she also loves doing it, considers it to be part of her responsibilities:

> To me, that is just part of your job. If you're just in the classroom and you're just teaching, then you're restricted to just teaching your subject matter. And I don't think that's what [education] is about. I think it's definitely about being involved. Teaching them about drama, about make-up and hair for the fashion show. Even just participating in the activities on the lunch hour.

For them extra-curricular activities provide opportunities to develop relationships and to personalize their relationships.

Teaching for Paula and Pat means that students are responsible for their learning. As teachers, they act as facilitators, providing the students with a safe environment where they can express themselves without fear of being ridiculed and develop the necessary lifeskills they will need to succeed in life.

Teaching is also personal and enjoyable. It is caring for students as people and that translates into forming relationships, having fun with the students, and being involved in school activities. But it also means that the students get to know them as people, not just teachers. People--like them--who enjoy having fun, who risk by being silly, who make mistakes. This is all part of creating relationships and earning respect from the students. The "rewards are intangible" and the benefits in the classroom are immeasurable. They wouldn't do otherwise.

CHAPTER V

Their Students Speak

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I attempted to give a portrait of the two participants by describing a day as I imagined it after piecing together different moments from the observations and selections from the interviews. This has given the reader a glimpse of these teacher-leaders: what they think and how it translates into action. However, to have a better understanding of the effect on the students, it is to them that one must turn. The focus of this chapter is to describe the significance of teacher-leaders for the students.

The student is the raison d'être of education, the focus of teaching and learning. The role of educators is to assist the students in their intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual development through the teaching of the various disciplines. Through interaction with the students, the teacher establishes a rapport with them, allowing their lives to intertwine and touch each other. Teachers who are aware of their responsibilities and concerned about the needs of their students will consciously and unconsciously try to create a positive learning environment to meet the needs of the students they touch.

The teacher-leader as seen from the students' perspective is such a teacher. There were noticeable similarities in the students' responses to the questionnaires of both teachers. It confirmed an air of authenticity to the comments of the teachers. In those findings, the theme "reaching the students" emerged. From this theme emerged two categories: "Being myself" and "I need lifeskills". There are similarities and overlaps between the categories. I tried to differentiate each category clearly but they are so intertwined that it was difficult to make well-defined distinctions. However, each category highlights different aspects of the influence the teacher-leaders have on the students.

Each category is explored in three sub-sections. In the first sub-section, the findings of the study are presented through a composite voice of both Paula's and Pat's students. They speak through the composite voice of Jason and Angela. This gives the students a strong voice and symbolizes their significance in education. By having the students speak first, I have emphasized the importance of listening to the students. They best can convey to us their needs. I have made minimal editing changes to allow the voices of the students to flow naturally.

In the second sub-section, the findings are presented through the teacher's voice by presenting individual excerpts from the interviews with each teacher. This symbolizes the teacher-leaders who view their mission as one of service to the students. My discussion of sections one and two is found in the third section.

Being myself

Jason's voice.

I like being in Paula's class. I feel quite comfortable there, unlike most classes. Sometimes, I feel a little awkward because I am not good in French, but still relaxed and fairly comfortable. I feel secure. Like at home. I'm not worried about being embarrassed. And, I feel welcomed. Actually, I like the fact that she welcomes everyone and makes people feel comfortable in the classroom setting. And when we're down, she can always raise our spirits.

In Pat's class too, I feel welcomed. It's like we're a family. I look forward to English every day. If I'm in a bad mood when I go to English, I leave in a good and happy mood.

Pat's and Paula's classes are different because of them. In their classes, I learned I'm unique in my own way. I am no better nor worse than anyone else in the class. We are all equal. They make you feel like an equal.

They both let you be more open. I like the way the class is able to share ideas and stories. Paula, she makes learning fun by joking in class and having the class participate in the activities. I like having the chance to tell stories and jokes. I feel important when I'm included in class discussions. And I can ask questions without being ridiculed. It's the same in Pat's class: she gets everyone involved in discussions and in debates. Especially when we have debates. This class becomes one of the most challenging ones. But we also laugh a lot in her classes.

Although I don't enjoy French, I do enjoy learning. It is fun and you can learn. I've never been in a class where I can learn, be interested, and be bored all at the same time (because there are aspects of the course that are boring and even she cannot change that). I like it because I learn. She gives fun projects.

So does Pat. We do cartoon, plays, raps, or comic books relating to literature. You should have seen us the day we read "Beowulf" in candle light without the lights on! She's such a passionate and dramatic teacher! She puts her heart and soul into her teaching. Like when she acts out some scenes.

Pat makes us work hard. If she thinks you can do better, she'll tell you and it makes you try harder and you do better. I've learned that I'm really lazy in Paula's class. Sometimes she scares me into working, which is what I need because as I said before I've had trouble in French and never liked it much.

When you aren't doing well, Paula believes in you. She will always make time to explain something you don't understand. If you still don't get it, she will give up time to help you more. She's willing to explain something a million ways, a million times. So will Pat. She likes to go in depth. The details she goes into to describe the characters in the novels we read! And she makes it interesting. She uses visual examples, this way we can imagine it better.

I feel important in their classes. They both make me feel special. That's why I believe in myself. They encourage me to achieve. It gives me confidence.

They're not so different that they can't relate to us and our lives. Which is so vital. Because they hold such a close relationship with their students, they learn from us. I would rather learn from someone who can learn from me. It seems so much more fair, and it works.

I guess I feel accepted for who I am and where I'm at. They don't start cracking up when you give a wrong answer. They don't embarrass the students in front of everyone when a student does something. They will talk to that student privately. They like me for who I am and treat me like an adult. They are both great teachers and you know they care about you.

Excerpts from Paula's story.

I chose teaching because I love young people and because I enjoy the interaction. I enjoy sharing with them. I enjoy what I give them and what they give me, because it's a two way street. I learn from them as well.

. . .

Basically, it's respect of other, that's the big thing. They know how I feel about it. Respect of others. If someone is talking, you keep quiet. I do not allow anyone to say something that may hurt others.

When there's a problem, and depending what is the behavior, I address the misbehavior of the person, call up their name, or just look at them longer than usual with a stern look on my face. If it's very disruptive then I like to take the student out of class and talk to them.

. . .

In my class, I use the communicative approach because they get to express themselves, which is difficult sometimes. It's rewarding to see those that are shy and afraid to say anything, start with an idea and then an opinion. And first thing I know they too are sharing. That's something.

. . .

Outside the classroom, my relationship is very different. I enjoy kidding around with them, talking about issues, things going on in their lives. They talk to me about the dance, or their boyfriend, or the soccer game, the volleyball game they saw on TV last night.

I like to get to know them a little bit outside the classroom, so that I can refer to them in my lessons. I'll use them as an example and I poke a little bit of fun at them. Some of them I can't poke fun but I'll use them in generic examples.

I establish this rapport with them because I like people. They keep me young at heart. They're fun to be with. I like to laugh. It shows them I respect them as people first and then as student. I can't function in a classroom where I don't relate to them at all. If I can't reach them, they won't listen.

Excerpts from Pat's story.

I love to share what I know in English, sharing that with students and possibly discovering new ideas with them as well. I'm not a lecturer. I try to lead the students into discovery, into an experience. If I haven't taught them anything at all in English, at least I know I've taught them to love literature or at least to be able to criticize literature.

. . .

When I lead the students, I give them hints, strong hints, indications. I may give them one or two themes, what do they think about those, and ask them what are some of the themes that they think are in the works.

. . .

So instead of sitting there listening to someone speak for 50 minutes, they are interacting, and doing some great creative things. They are either acting out or ... we did Beowulf in a rap song and they performed it for some parents and some teachers and they had the dried ice and they were all dressed in black, with chains, and it was a lot of fun.

When I'm preparing to teach a novel, I ask myself how they can identify with the novel. For example with Jane Eyre, they can identify with the issues. There's a little bit of romance so you build on that and the supernatural they enjoy so I make them aware of the supernatural connection.

. . .

At the beginning of the year, I tell them that things are a little more open in this class. They don't always have to put up their hands, but the rule is that they have to respect others.

. . .

Often I will have them pair off or in groups of three or four because I want them to learn from each other. They get all excited about it. They need to be directed and guided so I will ask them questions so that they can take it one step further, one level of thinking higher.

. . .

My relationship with the students is wonderful. It's almost as if they are my equals. When I come in the morning on my way to the staffroom, there are always students in the hallways and I stop and talk to them. I just ask them how things are going or if I don't teach them, what are they doing, what's new. I know most of them take a musical instrument or play a sport, so I try to remember what they do so I can ask them something that is important to them.

I usually spend my preps in my class working but there are always students in here. Often we'll end up just talking and they'll ask which kind of music did you listen to when you were a kid.

. . .

I think it's important at the end of every unit to ask the students what they liked and what they didn't like. I know that you can't please everybody. Students' feedback to me is very important. Even comments on my teaching. This leaves you very vulnerable but I think it's a necessity to make you a better teacher.

Commentary.

Jason feels respected by these teachers. He feels accepted for who he is and has no need for a facade. He feels unique and special. To show them how important they are as human beings, both Paula and Pat establish a positive rapport with their students, taking an interest in them as individuals with unique experiences. These relationships then become a bridge linking their experiences outside the classroom to that of the classroom, allowing them to relate the students' personal experiences to their learning. Because Paula and Pat listen to his stories and share some of their own with him, Jason feels validated and part of a family in their classes.

Students understand that their success in school depends on their learning. They want to learn, they want to be challenged, to be successful. Although Jason doesn't enjoy French he enjoys learning because the class is animated. He is involved in his learning, being an active participant in the various activities and projects the teacher assigns.

Paula uses the communicative approach in teaching the language, which requires an active participation from the students. She will initiate discussions and tap into their daily lives to create the link that is needed to internalize their learning, to make it their own. This creates interest which makes learning enjoyable.

Pat leads them into discovery, having them experience the literature. This way she hopes the student will develop a love for literature. Jason attests to it commenting on her dramatization of literary passages or the novel ways of experiencing Beowulf be in through a candlelight reading or rap songs.

Part of the process of learning involves integrating the concepts and the values. Central to integration of knowledge to the self is the voice. The voice is not only the sound, but the thoughts and the feelings of the person. Jason is not afraid to discuss and share his stories, his thoughts, his opinions. He knows he will be heard but more important he knows he won't be ridiculed when asking questions.

The students in Paula's and Pat's classes feel comfortable and relaxed. They gladly participate. To make their students feel respected and accepted, both Pat and Paula create an atmosphere of security and of belonging by recognizing every one of their students as special, unique individuals. They let them know how special and important they are. They care for them and provide a safe and pleasant environment for their learning. This alone reinforces their self-esteem, an essential component for personal growth and learning.

I need lifeskills

Angela's voice.

There is more than one approach to a problem. In basketball practice, Paula tries different ways. She listens, she asks us for our suggestions. She'll listen to them and give hers. If hers is better, but we wanted to try our ideas, then she would let us try. If it didn't work, then we tried another one, She never got angry. This gives us some leadership. We learn from our mistakes, we are allowed to develop.

When the team made decisions, we talked a lot, sometimes we voted, other times, it's consensus. The coach asked the managers for their suggestions. That made them feel important. It is now easier to make decisions because my ideas are valued. It gave us more confidence in our individual decision-making.

When there was a conflict, she was up-front. She will talk about it. It helps us to be open, there were no vendettas. We felt comfortable doing it because it was a positive atmosphere. We've learned to control our emotions, deal with them by talking them out, in discussions, in a positive way, not in a negative way. Let people deal with their problems, best not to interfere.

In practice, she participates. That's important because we see the coach as human. She makes mistakes too when she plays. So we are not afraid when we make a mistake.

She showed us how to take losing, relax when losing. She never got angry, didn't blame anybody in particular. It was a team effort. We learned to grin and crack a joke.

When we lose, we all get together in a circle and scream together to let it all out. And then we feel okay, we can go on. She asks us to write down our impressions on how we played ourselves, how the team played, and how each one of us felt we could improve. Then she would take the papers and go over them and at the next practice, she would discuss these things as a group. No names, just what came out.

This is the first time we had a coach that did this. It's very effective. It's a way of taking it out that is productive and a way of looking at yourself.

Jason says that Pat does that too in Drama. When they make decisions as a group, Pat steers the discussion. Apparently in a somewhat haphazard way. She gives them the consequences. I heard her once at a rehearsal: "If you don't learn your lines, it's your play you're botching up". She doesn't threaten them. She gives them ownership of the play. Like Paula does with our basketball team. Pat is the supervisor and the director but she gives her opinion once in a while.

Jason commented on how he has changed. He said he learned how to treat others by observing Pat. Before he was shy and gave the cold shoulder. Now he makes a good impression and he says he can start talking. It's easy! So he says.

They are the kind of person that you can come and talk to. They are willing to answer questions students may have. They are willing to help students who don't understand.

They are role-models for us. Someone we can look up to. They give us confidence in our career goals.

Excerpts from Paula's story.

My role? It's several things wrapped up into one. It's to teach them to live their daily lives and do well. I teach them lifeskills. Interaction with people, decision-making, problem-solving. That one is very essential in this day and age, how to survive given the amount of competition in our school and to enter university.

. . .

I also teach them attitude. Especially when I coach. Now that's a difficult one to cope with. How to handle losing, winning. Are we evading things because we are afraid of losing, or because we're afraid of failing or because we want to win? Why are we on this team? Because we want to win or because we want to have a good time?

. . .

Yes, when we lose, we all get together in a circle and scream together to let it all out. It gets their negative feelings out. Then we can go on. Afterwards, they laugh. There's a great release of negative tension. By doing this together, it strengthens the group, they get close. By sharing their loss, they develop a stronger sense of group, of community, of family, of togetherness, They all feel supported. The loss is taken as a group.

. . .

Another one is cooperation with others. How to work together. It's okay to make a mistake in my class. It's alright cause that's how you're going to learn.

To take on whatever challenges they have and to do something about it. And be able to handle it. You don't chose your problems, just be able to handle them.

Excerpts from Pat's story.

They have to learn by themselves because otherwise when they're adults and they are no longer in a school situation, how do they make decisions? How do they continue to learn because learning is something you do till you die so how do they continue that if you don't teach them the skills? So by giving them information and asking them to regurgitate it, they are not learning how to learn.

. . .

And I talk about how the group worked, how they felt, what was going on, if I could help a little bit more. I try to get them to understand that maybe there was a problem and often they don't know how to deal with it. They don't know how to divide the work or brainstorm.

. . .

When a leader leads properly, you are teaching everybody, or at least role-modelling for everybody that sees you, what a leader is. As true leaders, we need to be strong people, with confidence to allow for mistakes.

. . .

I'm not just teaching them about literature. I'm also teaching them about social skills. Some of these students don't often have that much courage to talk to people, especially in a school like this one. So I think that it is important, especially as a teacher, to treat them as equals and show them that they're human and you realize that they're human. So I ask them what kind of music they listen to and if I haven't heard of the band I'll ask them if I could listen for a moment on their walkman.

. . .

Commentary.

Angela enjoyed her participation on the team. It was an opportunity to work with others, to develop her decision-making skills because her ideas were asked. They were valued. Her thoughts were important. Someone wanted to hear her. It confirmed in her mind that she was "okay". She could trust her inner voice. It was a valid one.

She also learned how to deal with the negatives in her life, how to deal with conflicts, how to accept mistakes and failures. Her experiences with the team that Paula coached taught her to accept her feelings and deal with them. It was okay to scream and let out the tension when they lost. But one must go on and with Paula she learned to process her experiences, to reflect and listen to her inner voice, to trust it. For Paula, working together was important and that meant taking time to reflect about the event and then sharing their thoughts and feelings. She valued the inner voice of everyone and reaffirmed it to everyone by asking their opinions.

Angela found a network of supportive people on the team. She could share with friends but there were times when she needed the ear of an adult. And she found one with Paula. Even in a world of unfriendly adults, there was someone willing to listen to her and be her friend. Having problems, needing someone to talk to, seeking help was normal and acceptable.

For the students in the year play, according to

Jason, Pat plays a minor role in the direction of the play, preferring to let the students work out their conflicts, the snags in the play. Occasionally she will give an opinion but the play is theirs and to have them take ownership they need to make the decision.

Although the students are not aware of it, they are also learning lifeskills in Pat's and Paula's classes. Working in groups, making decisions on their projects, listening to others, accepting others' point of view are all lifeskills both Paula and Pat are consciously trying to develop in students. As Pat said learning is learning to learn. That is what these teachers want to transmit to their students.

The effect the teacher-leaders have on students is described as a positive one and relates to the philosophy and the praxis of the teacher-leaders. From the perspective of the students, it appears that teacher-leaders develop in their students a strong sense of self and self-esteem that enables them to develop positive attitudes toward life and confidence in their abilities.

CHAPTER VI

Teacher-Leaders in the School Community

Introduction

While the influence of teacher-leaders on the students they reach is noticeable, their influence in the school community is not as easily observed. The teacher-leaders' effect on the school community is explored in this chapter through the eyes of the administrator. As a colleague, Lori is able to observe Paula and Pat in their different roles and in action and thus can see their abilities. In the two years that she has worked with the two teachers, she has continually been impressed. She will explain why she chose these two participants, how they empower the school community and what the needs of teacher-leaders are. I have quoted directly from the interviews with Lori and have then commented on the significance of her observations. Excerpts from Paula's and Pat's stories are also presented, where appropriate, for their perspective.

Lori is an administrator who believes in the transformational model of leadership. For her, leadership does not belong to the designated authority figure, although she or he holds much power. On the contrary, leadership means that everyone can lead, each one by contributing in her or his own way.

Consequently, she is always searching for ways to develop each person's gifts so they can then be shared with others. As a result, the school community benefits from the creativity of everyone.

Recognizing Teacher-Leaders

Lori's Voice.

I've been here two years now and ever since I've been here, I've seen Paula as a doer and as someone with excellent interpersonal communication skills with the students and the staff. In education, this is very appealing to me.

I see Paula as a leader. The students see in her a person of integrity. She's a person of dedication and she's open. She is creative and she has an intuitive sense as well. All those things are important to me.

She has a vision as an educator. Her students are important. She is person-oriented and values are very important to her. And she has a sense of community-building. Students care about her. She's ready to go the extra mile. She treats the students as people, not as "its" or "theys". The students respect her.

I've seen her in her classroom, in the hallway. I've seen the time she puts in with the students at noon hour. I've seen her at games as a spectator with the students. I've seen her at dances. I've seen her in the gym and in the hallways at lunch hour with the students. I've seen her as a coach.

Last year, I saw her in a very difficult situation with the basketball team and I was very impressed with how she handled it. The senior basketball team were not winning many games and the girls were very aggressive, confrontational. Paula was very patient with them, very professional. It's very discouraging to deal with aggressive, ungrateful and very arrogant girls. Who needs this? She's giving her time for these students and they dump on her. She could have said, "shove it". But she didn't. She's patient with them, she's professional with them. She was very graceful and very polite with them.

I'd say that she's a self-starter. You can have a dependent, independent or interdependent relationship with the administrator. She has an interdependent relationship with me. She doesn't need constant assurance or affirmation. I know that she'll do it. We are supportive of each other. That is very important to me. She cares for students.

. . .

I chose Pat because I believe she has the qualities of a true leader. She has a very strong sense of personal integrity. She has a sense of vision, a vision of knowing who she is and what she wants and she has a strong sense of openness and of humility. She has a good sense of her creativity, strong imagination, a strong intuition.

Pat has a vision of self, a very positive self-esteem. She has a strong sense of her own identity of herself as a person and as a teacher. And she has a sense of personal security. She is not afraid of making mistakes. She is not afraid to be vulnerable. She is not afraid to give, to go the extra mile which automatically gives her a sense of belonging in the school. She has a strong sense of ownership in the classroom and of the school. Then she would automatically have a sense of purpose which would give her that vision and that sense of achievement. I believe that there is no way you can influence or have an effect on someone else if you don't believe in yourself. It works through osmosis, sometimes directly. If you ask me to influence or have an impact on others and I don't have a strong sense of who I am, I can't. It's impossible.

I know she believes that life is a gift. And that she is a gift and everything she has is a gift. And so if I believe that and she believes that then we will give freely but we won't take that strong personal ownership. It's like a river flowing. You just go with the flow. It's an unconscious belief. You don't own anything. Everything I have is a gift. So I don't take personal pride, which of course is the ego, and the bigger our ego, the less free we are.

She's humble. She's willing to risk, to take chances. She's willing to give and to receive as well. My ego can be so big that it blinds me from seeing or receiving the gift of others. Then I take ownership of what happens. But Pat sees the gifts of everyone else, the staff, the students, the parents, anyone who comes into her life. And I believe that a person like that is very humble because you are able to give and to receive.

Pat is a leader. The word education comes from the latin word "educere" which means to lead out. And that to me is the sign of any educator, that we draw the students out, we lead them and we also lead them from their own self, for the gift that they are. And I think that Pat does that in her very strong sense of active participation which is often the key sign of the effective teacher. You have the students involved, because learning is really suppose to be fun. In fact I don't think we learn enough that is enjoyable. And the things that we remember that we learn were probably very enjoyable.

Commentary.

How does one go about identifying teacher-leaders when the concept is a relatively unexplored one? For Lori, it did not seem to be a difficult task. With her concept of leadership, it is quite simple since leadership is not defined necessarily by a designated position but more by the personality and the contributions of the person.

To be a leader in the true sense of the word, a leader who influences and has an impact on others, one must be a person of integrity, a person with a strong sense of the self. Knowing oneself is crucial, for there is no fear when one is sure of oneself. There is a strong sense of personal security, thus a willingness to risk and a respect for one's own failings or mistakes.

Such a person can give freely of his/herself and go the extra mile. Both Paula and Pat give freely of themselves to the school community. That commitment gives them a sense of belonging to the school community. They feel a part of it. But they also both feel that it is important for students to feel ownership of their school.

To feel ownership, one must feel a sense of belonging to a community, a sense of participation in the community. Paula and Pat, through their leadership, help students belong to the community. They organize activities with students, they allow students to make decisions about their learning and about their co-curricular activities. They hold the students responsible for their learning and their activities. And this gives the students a sense of belonging, a sense of "owning" their learning, a sense of personal achievement in their activities.

Not only do Paula and Pat give students the opportunities to build their community but they also provide a caring atmosphere where students can relate with them on a personal level. Paula and Pat laugh with students, share stories, and a little bit of themselves. They get to know their students as friends. How better to experience learning than in an environment where there is laughter and caring, where an intimacy that bonds teachers and students is created and where a healthy community of people who care for each other is built?

Their Influence on the School Community

Lori's voice.

I think both Paula and Pat have made learning fun for students. When the students are involved, the more they get and the more fun it is for them. But you also get ownership from the students. They want to be there, they want to be part of it, they know they are missing something if they are not there. That's the sense of community, of belonging that Paula and Pat create in their classroom. It gives the students a strong sense of themselves and a positive self-esteem. And the students enjoy their classes very much.

It's quality time. They are always with the students. And the students react positively. They really care about Pat and Paula. They are significant to the students. I think we learn best when we have a positive relationship. I don't know if you can learn anything at this age from anybody, a parent, a teacher, if they don't care about you. I think it's a tremendous block if they don't care about you. It's almost as if the students want to spite you. The bottom line when you're a leader is how we care for others.

There is some confusion, some chaos, some overlapping. But what do you get? You get students who are excited, who are turned on, who would spend a lot of their March break practising their play and who would spend hours and hours buying furniture to build the set because it is theirs. They get ownership, they get excited, they want to be here and that to me is what learning is all about.

Things happen here. The students learn that the school has a very strong academic program, the students are experiencing success academically and emotionally, and socially and spiritually and morally and ethically. Then having somebody on staff like Pat and Paula is an incredible bonus because our school is only as good as we are. The school is just a building. It makes the administration work a lot easier and much more successful. The better my staff, the more successful I am.

To be teacher-leaders is to experience the gift that you are. It gives Paula and Pat a very strong sense of themselves, it gives them a positive self-esteem. Then they can go on to have a strong sense of purpose and a sense of achievement and then the cycle starts over again. They are able to give. If Pat and Paula do this for students, they are going to be other "Pats and Paulas". The students will be able to give back to society like Pat and Paula are doing. It's on-going like an evolution.

I think that generally speaking Pat and Paula have made a very big impact on our staff. Our school is a different school because they are here. Because they have brought these gifts, they have involved themselves in a very generous, professional way. I believe that they have influenced their peers because they challenge them to do a better job, to do things differently. I've noticed a change in the staff. The attitude has changed. Attitude towards one another, towards their professional lives. Bonding together.

I can think of three staff members that came on staff this year. Paula has been very supportive of them. She spent time with them, she listened to them, she showed interest in them, helped them with specific things, things that they didn't have to bother me about, for example, information, sharing frustrations, guiding them, giving them suggestions. And it really helped. I know it has. They feel very supported by her. They admire her.

And in the English department, there is a brand new teacher, first year teacher in the department and I think Pat has supported her, encouraged her, involved her, brought her to her classroom, shared ideas with her, given her teaching ideas, given her notes, given her ideas, listened to her, given her time, emotional support. That is only one person.

Even the chair in the English department, who has been in this department for many years, in his own teaching and also other members of the department has been influenced. But she has also received from them. That department has influenced the whole staff because in a way they are an ideal for the other departments. The other departments are looking, they are thinking.

Then I think Pat and Paula have influenced other women. There is one group of women on staff whom Paula and Pat have helped. They were on the right road but Pat and Paula have encouraged and supported them so that they can continue being more who they are. There are people, on the other hand, who are the type of people for whom teaching is a job. It's not a career. it's not a profession. They may not be able to admit that. Pat and Paula challenge them. They have probably made some of the women feel uncomfortable because they don't do what Pat and Paula are doing. In a way, these women would probably feel uncomfortable with them because of their relationship with the students, with the other staff, their sense of commitment to education.

We all pay a price for who we are. Pat and Paula will probably pay a price for who they are. They already are paying that price. The price that some people won't like them, will feel threatened by them, some people will feel very insecure, some people will try to put them down. Some people will try to sabotage them. But that is not Pat's and Paula's problem. This will be Paula's and Pat's Achilles's heel.

For the female students in the school it is important that they have female teacher-leaders as role-model. The girls have seen basically and generally only male designated leaders. I think that Pat and Paula in the development of their own gifts would be active role models to young women. "Oh, look at that. I want to do that. I could be like that." They give a sense of security. "If she can do it, so can I do it".

I also think they challenge the boys just by their very being, but I think they would also challenge them consciously. It would affect the boys' relationships with other men, other young men, other young women, with adult women. We are not little separate pieces. We are one, we are one human being in the process of becoming a person.

Benefits to the administration? Well, I'm wise enough at this point in my life to know I can't do it all. And everyone has a gift to offer in the school. If their gifts are not being used there is a deficit in the school. Having teacher-leaders on staff is very positive and the more the better. It helps me personally also because they're able to entrench my own values and my own vision. They are like my troops. I have the big picture and with people like Paula and Pat, they can help me put my vision into reality. People like Paula and Pat are able to address the vision.

When I involve the staff in decisions, I feel I have made a better choice. I've only got one head, one brain, one set of experiences. When you have ten people, you have ten whole lives, with experiences. of their own.

I see power as tender power. I see empowerment as the key, where you empower others rather than keep it all to myself. It is more life giving. People have more ownership, cause it's ours and not mine. Power is sharing, power is involving. It can happen in the classrooms too. I think our students in our school feel very empowered. We give them all kinds of opportunities.

If I could give them any position in the school I would probably start both Paula and Pat as department heads in their subject areas or in student affairs. And I told them this last year, they could do very well as an assistant-principal in the school.

We need designated leaders that will help teachers in the classrooms. If the classroom teachers know that I don't care, I'm not interested in them, I'm not supportive of what they are doing, how is that going to affect them? So as a designated leader, Pat and Paula could empower and impact other teachers. Good leaders influence many, many people. Where there is fire, there is smoke, where there is fire there is heat, where there is fire there is light.

Excerpts from Paula's story.

My relationship with my colleagues? It's good with some and with others it's just professional and that's it. I know that I have some influence on a few of them. One of them spoke to me about organizing a trip together for the students. Others support what I do. One of the teachers in the French Department comes to me for support and advice. They think what I do is creative and therefore, sometimes imagine what I take on is somewhat out of the ordinary. "Oh yea, that's Paula, the creative one". But they appreciate it. And there are some I would say, I don't know, I guess they are jealous about it. I sometimes feel that way. When I feel that happening, I just stay clear. "You're not going to rain on my parade".

. . .

I have been told many times by other staff members, older staff members that I was silly to take on a trip with the students. They have given me flack about being friends with the students. Teach the language, but do not make friends. That's what I've been told.

. . .

The administration will consult me about some student, what kind of worker is the student in class, about the general behavior or patterns in their behavior, disruptions, definite concerns, follow-up with parents with regards to the student's behavior.

. . .

I help other colleagues, because when I first started teaching there was a lot of support. Then I was moved to another school and that changed. It was a-sink-or-swim situation and being new and younger I had a lot of doubts. To know that there is someone there who is supportive is enough in itself to motivate me to do the best I can. Without that support I'm more apprehensive of coming up with new ideas, trying out new situations. Knowing how important it was for me, I like to think that I can help the new teachers on staff by being supportive so that they can feel they are doing well. The students appreciate them more, other staff members as well and it gives them the opportunity to show their potential. It has a ripple effect too.

Excerpts from Pat's Story.

My relationship with my colleagues? That's tough! For the majority it's good. It's very good. There are always one or two people on staff that you don't get along with just because your views are so different. I had an incident where I went to visit a school with some teachers on staff and on the way there all they did was talk about the administration, the school and other teachers. When they asked me why I wasn't saying anything, I told them quite honestly that what was going on was unprofessional and unethical and I didn't want to get involved in it. So I avoided them. It's only the surface, chitchat with them and it's okay with me.

. . .

I don't know if I influence my colleagues. I know that I make some feel bad because they can't do the things I do. One of my colleagues who has family commitments was telling me the other day when I was going to the box social on the noon hour: "It's a good thing you're young, Pat" and she just laughed. For some they have restrictions and can't give as much as they want. But they do support me. Definitely, definitely they support me!

. . .

Just the other day, my English Department Head said, "there are a lot of changes that have happened in the last year and a half, and I think that you have been part of those changes".

. . .

I'm going out on a limb and saying, "Yes, I do have a great influence on the school atmosphere." I go to all the school dances and I play some silly role and the students think I'm absolutely crazy. Paula and I will also get together to organize some silly contest between our classes and invite the school to be spectators. And the students come to watch us and cheer us on. It creates school spirit.

. . .

I had a boy who didn't want to be in my class because I was a woman. It was a cultural thing. He had even asked me how I could be as intelligent as Mr. X who taught the other section. I had some problems with that so I met with the parents and we decided he should stay in my class. Anyway, he persevered in class till the end of the year. Now this year, he was registered in another English class and he transferred to my class a month into the course. He told me he transferred because he enjoyed my classes. He was very honest when he hated me and he was very honest when he thought I was the greatest. He's doing beautifully.

. . .

Commentary.

The influence of teacher-leaders on the school community is clearly apparent to the school principal. Some colleagues might feel threatened. For others, creative people like Paula and Pat can be a positive influence. Pat was a factor in the changes that occurred in the English Department. Others recognize and support the teachers who can get involved. Pat recognizes that not everyone has the same talents she has and can commit themselves like she does but she appreciates their support and accepts that as their contribution.

Both Paula and Pat believe that the ethic of caring needs to be extended to all members of the school community to develop a strong community. Like Paula, Pat is willing to support any colleague who needs help. Paula's experiences as a beginning teacher have taught her how alienated one can feel in a new environment. Consequently, she readily volunteers her assistance to those who she feels need it. It creates not only a stronger staff but also bonds of friendships.

Their relationship with the administration is one of give and take. They feel valued because the administration includes them in the decision-making process. This gives Paula and Pat a sense of ownership and therefore a greater sense of responsibility toward the school community. The consideration shown by the administration in including Paula and Pat in decisions serves as an example for them. Both Pat and Paula mentioned in an interview the role Lori played in their leadership with the students. Pat appreciates the support she gets from Lori when she tries new things in her classroom. Paula acknowledges Lori's influence in her own approach to students, stating that she observes Lori and tries to implement what she sees in her own classroom and with other people. They see her as a strong role model, an inspiration and try "to model her strength" and "her vision of transformational leadership".

The students are the ones who stand to gain the most with teacher-leaders in the school. Not only do Paula and Pat influence other teachers and create a caring atmosphere, but they also serve as caring women and adult role-models for both female and male student. In their interaction with the students, the students witness positive lifeskills and values. But the most important role-modelling is the respect and the caring Pat and Paula demonstrate for everyone. There is no stronger teacher than example, and the voices of Paula's and Pat's students have attested to that.

The Needs of Teacher-Leaders

Lori's voice.

I think that one of the biggest needs is to support them in helping their gifts grow. They need encouragement, acknowledgment. They need our support. They also need opportunities to do some professional development. Give them responsibilities as much as they would like. Show them that you care, that you believe in them. Know what they are doing. What they are doing is important, it's impacting lives. The more they are supported and appreciated, the more they will do. I think teacher burn-out comes from not being appreciated, not being supported, being put-down, being challenged all the time. If you're not trusted, if you're not given scope and ownership and support, then you just say, "I don't care."

Excerpts from Paula's story.

What I need is support, just enough to know that what I do is supported from the administration and in my department. With this administration I feel very good because they are more receptive, more open-minded than the previous administration I had. You become a part of the decision-making process. I've had administration that have intimidated me, perhaps because it was my first years of teaching. But this administration is more nurturing. They are more receptive about ideas, about things going on in my class, about doing more. Therefore it motivates me more to work harder and do a better job.

. . .

Networking is also important. I have a good system of networks: open-minded people to bounce off ideas, verify if it will work. Other people bring in another perspective. Some people call that the women's disease, discussing and sharing ideas.

. . .

And I need some opportunities for professional development to broaden my scope. I enjoy the learning process. I'm hungry for knowledge. I like to be open to new ideas. it helps me to exist in the realm of education and to know what is new.

. . .

I guess the most important is knowing that the students are able to develop in my classrooms. It felt good getting feedback on my teaching. I see what they like, I feel I'm not that bad. I see it from the perspective of the students.

. . .

[The administration] have also consulted me on some issues involving decision-making, ranging from physical things about the school to bouncing off ideas about potential new courses or programs. Even about meetings or perhaps if something transpired because of a meeting, or an issue with the staff, I've been asked my opinion on the situation.... I feel flattered.

. . .

Excerpts from Pat's story.

My two main needs are support and trust. Because some of the things I do in class are a little bit different, I take risks, I'm not afraid to fail. All I need is someone to support me when I do fail or I need support when I decide to do something that is just a little bit different than the normal. I do have that in this school.

. . .

Another need is time off, for seminars, in-service, or just one or two blocks while I'm doing the year play so that I can go and pick up my son early and spend some time with him, because once that bell rings at three o'clock I'm involved with the school play and I might not be home until five or six o'clock. I was here till 8:30 p.m. on Monday. and that is not uncommon. It's not that I don't like giving up some of my time but just to help me balance some of my responsibilities. It is really important to get some time off so I can gather my thoughts.

. . .

Praise and acknowledgment for a project done is also important. Just knowing that they have been successful and that they got recognition. A little card or a piece of paper saying thank you and I really appreciate what you are doing, especially on this project.

. . .

It feels great being involved in administrative decisions. It tells me they value me as an employee when they ask me for some response. And it gives us a more complete view of the situation and we can better understand the issues. We're all equals in this school.

. . .

Commentary.

In spite of all good intentions and the commitment one gives to an organization, if there is no support and no trust, there is often a gradual decline of creativity and dedication. Both Paula and Pat attest to that. With a caring and open-minded administration, they feel stimulated and encouraged. With encouragement and nurturing from the administration, they feel trusted and supported. They believe in themselves and dare to risk that much more. That in itself give them the impetus to be creative and try different things.

Even though they give freely of their gifts and their time, and share with others in building community, whenever they succeed, they appreciate the recognition. Praise is needed, for it is the thank you at the end. It is the recognition of their gifts, the celebration of their success with others. It is the sharing in the giving of their gifts. The reward for having given of oneself.

Another important need for Paula is the networking. The sharing of ideas, the opportunity to bounce off ideas with colleagues or other people provides her with another viewpoint. Interestingly, someone had previously told her that processing with others was considered a "woman's disease". Yet, for Paula, the exchange of ideas not only validates her voice and gives her assurance, but also broadens her perspective of her reality. Talking about a problem or an idea with someone else helps to clarify it. It enriches her understanding and further stimulates her creativity. As the saying goes: "two heads are better than one".

Creative people and committed people are always seeking ways of learning more, of growing, of developing their gifts. They feel a need to expand. Seminars and in-services provide some opportunities for them to further explore their gifts that they can use in building community with the students.

Pat has chosen to work part-time so as to have more time with her family and yet participate in some of the extra-curricular activities. She talked of the need to balance her family responsibilities with her school activities. She willingly gives of her time but would also appreciate some consideration from the school organization that would allow her some release time to juggle her schedule so as to meet her family as well as school commitments. School activities demand much of her time. Putting on a year play is time-consuming but also somewhat chaotic. Some release time gives her time to collect her thoughts and re-connect with herself, with her child or even with other commitments she may have.

Although teacher-leaders needs vary with each person, support from the administration remains the first and most important need for both Paula and Pat. Their influence on the school community as a whole is much appreciated by the administration, who being open to new ideas and to sharing power, recognized Paula's and Pat's leadership and involved them in the decision-making. Through the administration's encouragement in their teachings and activities, Paula and Pat felt supported and were thus better able to help create a dynamic school community. As for colleagues, although there is evidence that teacher-leaders influence them, it is difficult to assess the degree of it without violating the teachers' code of ethics.

CHAPTER VII

Reflections

Introduction

Reflection is the process of removing oneself from the situation to extrapolate meaning from the events and the experiences that have taken place. According to Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985:19) it is a process in which "people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it.... in order to lead to new understandings and appreciations". It enables us to expand our knowledge base and understanding of our world, which then leads to possibilities of change and growth, which in turn "often leads to very unexpected outcomes" (Boud et al., 1985:7).

Through reflection, I have attempted to understand the significance of teacher-leaders drawing on the observations and interviews with the participants, the students' responses and the readings I have done. I reflected on the meaning of teacher-leader in the school community and on the influence of teacher-leaders on the students.

I reflected on my own story, from the beginning of my teaching career until now, to examine my practice over the years and reflect on my pedagogy. Feeling the need to clarify my own philosophy of education and enhance my praxis, I reflected on my previous understanding of education and learning and how it had evolved over the years. I reflected on the impact of this study on my own growth as a woman and an educator and on the emergence of new understandings and appreciations for my profession.

The Meaning of Teacher-Leader

Defining teacher-leaders.

When I started my study, the term "teacher-leader" was rather vague in my mind. I wanted to study individuals who demonstrated leadership in the school but who were not in a designated administrative position. I knew teachers whom I classified as teacher-leaders because of their relationships with the students, and the trust and confidence they, as teachers, seem to develop in them. The students often talk favorably about those teachers. We often refer to such teachers as effective teachers. I wondered if I would find anything different in teacher-leaders than effective teachers. This meant I also had to research what was meant by the term "effective teacher".

When I reflect on the praxis of the teacher-leaders in my study, I recognize some similarities with effective teachers, namely a caring environment and meaningful tasks. However, the most apparent difference seems to be in their philosophy of teaching which will influence their approach to teaching. Teacher-leaders are concerned first and foremost about the individuals and the development of their human growth as a whole rather than the imparting of knowledge. Effective teachers, having been measured by the academic performance of their students based on their teaching strategies and techniques, appear to be concerned first and foremost with the students' academic development.

Teacher-leaders emphasize the potential of the students and their need to develop it. In much the same way as the famous Japanese violinist Shinichi Suzuki (1981) believes a child can develop any talent or ability in a nurturing and loving environment so do Paula and Pat believe in their students' ability to learn and provide for them the opportunities to develop their learning abilities in a caring, friendly atmosphere.

The one characteristic I found in the two study participants that is not mentioned in the effective teacher literature is the teacher's involvement in fostering a dynamic school spirit. Both teachers felt very strongly that the school was also "our school". Consequently, their participation in school activities attested to their belief in developing a dynamic school. Both were very involved in extra-curricular activities as coach of the basketball or year play director as well as volunteering on a number of other committees. Their participation in the activities organized by the Student Council validated the importance of such activities and attested to their sense of community and to the building of community that is important for the members of an organization if they are to feel part of it. If the teachers are not participants in student-lead activities, there is a missing part to the community. Teacher-leaders, like

Paula and Pat, serve as a link between the staff members and the students. There is a sense of being in it together that is essential to create community.

The creativity of teaching.

> As educators, we are first and foremost in the business of creating persons.
> (Strike, Haller, & Soltis, p. 84)

As creators of people, there are serious questions challenging educators. What does creating mean? How do we create? What are we creating? Fox (1979) takes the image one step further stating that everyone is an artist. He refers to the biblical tradition that "when Genesis declares that God make humanity in the 'image and likeness of God', it declares that all are artists. To be an 'image and likeness' of the Creator is to be a creator" (p. 108). Therefore as educators we create artists. And artists in turn will also create.

This means that everyone has the potential to become an artist and to create. Creativity is not exclusive to writers and to sculptors. We all possess creativity. It is the energy to transform, and to build, the nourishment of the living (Fox, 1979:108). It is the link that connects us to others, to our world, and ultimately to the cosmos. Without creativity we cannot build relationships, we cannot express our inner selves and discover who we truly are.

Our creativity is expressed through our gifts - complex and unique intangibles waiting to be discovered and developed. In time, through our voice and our interactions with others, we discover our gifts as well each others' gifts and share them when creating relationships, when discovering the world around us, and when discovering our purpose in life.

As mentioned earlier, "to educate" means "to lead, to draw out, to blossom". To educate, therefore, is to draw out the gifts of each individual. It means to lead the students to discover their gifts and to share them with others, to become the artists they are called to be through interaction with others, through the social process of interaction and communication.

For students, adolescence is a time for self-discovery, a time to discover their identity, answering the questions of their existence, the meaning, and the purpose of life (Elkind, 1984). It is a time to discover their gifts. It is a long process which requires opportunities to experience intimate relationships and productive accomplishments, freed of unnecessary pressures and accompanied by adult support and guidance. As adolescents change they have a great need to be accepted and to be recognized (Mitchell, 1975) for who they are, for the gifts they possess and the artist they are. They are motivated by a need to belong in their social groups, in their families, and in their community (Mitchell, 1975) where they can share their gifts without fear of rejection. Therefore, the interaction with others and the expression of oneself are very significant.

To become artists, the adolescents require a safe and secure environment where they are free to express themselves and where they can interact without fear of rejection and ridicule. An environment that provides an opportunity to experiment, to succeed and to make mistakes. An environment that supports and encourages growth through the learning of values and skills.

In the article, The Historical Significance of George Herbert Mead's Philosophy of Education, Renger,III summarized Mead's educational philosophy:

> Education is a social process involving the meaningful interaction and communication between acting individuals. It represents an attempt on the part of society to fully develop its individual members as thinking, socially conscious, and effective participants in the social process of that society (Peden & Chipman, 1979, p.46).

Education, then, is the process of creating: creating artists, creating relationships, creating community.

The students in Paula's and Pat's classes attested to the joys of building relationships, to the excitement of learning, to the exhilaration of knowing they can do it, to the celebration of laughter and sharing. They cherish the family ambience and the feeling of belonging in those classes. Paula and Pat believe in drawing out their students' gifts and empowering the students to use those gifts.

The giving is mutual. The students give the teachers their gifts. Both Paula and Pat learn from the students: what they like, what they do, what they want. They understand the students' needs for guidance and for protection. Consequently, they create a pleasant and safe environment where the students can transform their gifts into offerings for their classmates and for them. To share their thoughts and their feelings with their classmates, Paula and Pat allow the students' voices to be heard. They provided opportunities to the students to use their gifts to create projects that attest to their learning and that speak of their abilities. Thus they empower the students to become themselves.

The teacher's energies are combined with the students' to create a micro-community of people bonded by respect and acceptance for each other, each sharing the same vision: that of becoming who they are, each involved in the creation of the self and those around them by respecting and accepting each other for who they are and by working and sharing together.

The role of the teacher.

> Remember that you are facilitating another person's process. It is not your process.
>
> (Heider, p. 33)

If the learning activities are designed for self-discovery and interaction in small groups, what part does the teacher play in the learning process? If everyone is a teacher, what is the purpose of the formally designated teacher? How does this differ from the traditional role? If the teacher's responsibilities extend beyond the classroom, what then is the role of the teacher?

Both Paula and Pat did not consider themselves traditional teachers who believed they had all the knowledge and the sole responsibility to impart it. Neither did they see themselves as rigid authority figures who had to maintain conventional modes of conduct when relating with the students. For both Paula and Pat, the role of the teacher took on different forms depending on the situation and the needs of the students.

Although both participants originally did not identify themselves as leaders, they nevertheless took on the role of leaders. Of all the characteristics that distinguish leaders, Bennis (1989:6) states that "the most pivotal was a concern with a guiding purpose, an overarching vision". The vision Paula and Pat hold for their students is one of lifelong learners continuously discovering and growing, just as the traveller on the journey of life. Because they both personally live this vision, they hold the same one for their students and encourage them in their quest for learning. Consequently, their pedagogy centers on the development of skills and values that will assist and guide the students throughout their lives.

Paula's and Pat's role as a teacher is different than the traditional role-models they experienced during their own years as students. As Pat mentioned very early in the interviews, "I'm older and have more experience but that doesn't make me more intelligent." Because of this she shares her role as a teacher with the students. True, she has a degree and some knowledge they don't have, but learning involves more than absorbing only her knowledge. It involves having the freedom to interact, to share and to learn with the other students.

In a world of continual change, Rogers (1983:120) sees "the goal of education, if we are to survive, [as] the facilitation of change and learning". For him, "the only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn... how to adapt and change" (p.121). Knowles (1975:10) states the importance of redefining "education as a lifelong process, for knowledge gained at one point in time will become increasingly obsolete". Freire (1970) stresses the importance of dialogue in education rather than "banking" of knowledge. Dreikurs and Cassel (1972:20) speak of the importance of each individual being able to use "free choice in every situation" and therefore the necessity of giving the students the freedom to "be independent and to use the power of self determination".

If we are to espouse this belief, it is vital that the role of the teacher shift from that of "transmitter of information to facilitator of self-directed inquiry" (Knowles, 1975:10). The facilitator's role is to develop learners as individuals in process (Rogers, 1983:121). This means that the teacher guides students in their transformation by allowing them the freedom to discover and to share through interaction with other students in the classroom. By contributing and being useful, they will develop the needed social and learning skills for the continuous process of change and adaption.

Paula and Pat facilitate their students' learning by giving them several options when working on an assignment. Paula gives them a basic structure to guide their work but leaves options to allow them to make decisions. At the meeting with the grad committee, she made it a point to discuss all the suggestions the students brought up before asking them to make the decision.

As facilitators of students' learning, Paula and Pat take many risks and they view risk-taking as challenging and healthy. Aviator Brooke Knapp (as quoted in Bennis,1989:185) said, "There are two kinds of people: those who are paralysed by fear, and those who are afraid but go ahead anyway. Life isn't about limitations, it's about options." Although they have a curriculum to follow, the ways and means of transmitting the curriculum are basically theirs. And to enhance students' learning they dare in the classroom: being dramatic, being silly, being "weird", attempting projects that demand originality and free expression. They never know how the students will react but they will risk having students experience their learning to make it more personal and meaningful.

Central to their pedagogy is that the students take ownership of their learning by their direct involvement. Essential to the lifelong learner are tools for discovering the self. Bennis (1989:70-71) states that a fundamental characteristic of true leaders is the ability to "inventing" themselves by using their experiences and their skills to get to know themselves. He adds that "the more we know ourselves and our world, the freer we are to achieve everything we are capable of achieving" (p. 70). It is by experiencing, by sharing, and by reflecting that we get to know the self.

Giving the students ownership of their learning enables them to experience the process of decision-making in various situations. With ownership also comes responsibility for decisions, including that of dealing with mistakes and conflicts. Through interaction in their learning process, they experience mistakes and conflicts, and upon reflection on their experiences they can think on what they do and how it affects others. This can lead to a better understanding of the self and ultimately personal growth.

The environment Paula and Pat have created for their students is respectful of them as individuals. According to Van Manen (1986:32), "the sense of mood or atmosphere is a profound part of our existence. By it we know the character of the world around us. Mood is a way of knowing and being in the world". Furthermore, he states that "atmosphere is the way in which space is lived and experienced. But atmosphere is also the way a teacher is present to children, and the way children are present to themselves and to the teacher" (p.36). A positive class environment is therefore crucial to the development of skills, to learning values and to creating relationships.

Paula and Pat have created a respectful and caring environment by discovering their students' abilities and interests in life and by building meaningful relationships wherein the students can learn and laugh together. A large number of students commented that the difference between Paula's and Pat's classes and those of many other teachers was that learning was fun. Paula and Pat related to the students personally and allowed them to laugh with the teacher. Enjoying and celebrating life is very important for both Paula and Pat.

Does this mean that in many classrooms learning is a "dead" activity because the students are not allowed to celebrate the beauty and the joys of life? Does this mean that for many teachers learning can occur only in a dead and serious environment where there is little interaction? If so, then the education of our youth is in serious trouble.

It amazes me to see the discrepancies between the beliefs about learning in the education of adults and youth. In the workshops I have attended as an adult where I had a very positive learning experience, one of the first thing the facilitator did was to create a safe environment and encourage the interaction of the participants. When training as an educational instructor for teacher workshops, the educator stressed the importance of creating a comfortable, safe atmosphere where there is interaction and fun. Yet, in the high schools, teachers are boring students. It is sad when students say that this is the first time they had a teacher who cared enough for them to allow them to experience the difficulties and the joys of learning.

On one occasion, when speaking to Paula over the phone, I asked her what she was getting out of this study. She explained that she had previously been discouraged from establishing friendly ties with students and told, by both administrators and colleagues, to ignore the interactive approach to teaching. What she had to say both stupefied and elated me:

> The disillusionment instilled in me about the teaching profession by regressive administrators has been put aside and refilled with hope. It has given me more faith in the education system than I previously had.

This is a powerful and sad statement and it has serious implications. If teacher-leaders who have the greatest positive influence on students feel disillusioned about teaching because they are not supported but rather discouraged from leading, how will the educational system create the artists and the leaders the world so desperately needs?

Empowering the School Community

Empowering Students.

> Your children are not your children.
> They are the sons and daughters of Life's
> longing for itself.
> You may give them your love but not your
> thoughts,
> For they have their own thoughts.
> ...You may strive to be
> like them,
> But seek not to make them like you.
> (Gibran, p. 17)

Over the last decades, educators have often been at odds about the aims and purpose of education. Giroux (1988) discusses the controversy of education that has evolved over the years between two groups, the conservatives and the radicals. The conservatives, he contends, are defenders of "the public schools...as reproducers of dominant cultural traditions" (p.113). Their concerns centres on maintaining the standards of the dominant culture. The radicals, he claims, have criticized the conservatives for reproducing their culture on the masses:

> In general terms, they have argued that schools are reproductive in that they provide different classes and social groups with forms of knowledge, skills, and culture that not only legitimate the dominant culture but also track students into a labor force differentiated by gender, racial and class considerations (p. 114).

Although this was appropriate in times of stability and little change, he contends that in this new era of rapid change and awareness of our social reality, the purpose of schools needs to change if we want to free people from their oppressed state. What both radicals and conservatives have failed to do, Giroux (1988:114) continues, is to "engage the politics of voice and representation--the forms of narrative and dialogue--around which students make sense of their lives and schools".

The theme of voice in education is one that many educators have explored and advocated, although in different forms. Freire (1970:79) speaks of "the existential necessity of dialogue" to achieve significance as people and the importance of dialogue in the development of critical thinking. Noddings (1984:182) states the importance of "making the voice of the mother heard in both ethics and education" if we want to enhance caring. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) describe the importance of developing voice in young people, especially young women in order to validate their experiences and their ways of knowing. Rogers (1969) has long been advocating experiential learning that involves the active participation of the students in their learning. Giroux (1988:165) states the importance of "confirming and legitimating the knowledge and experience through which students give meaning to their lives" by recognizing, accepting and encouraging the students' voices.

In the development of a person, voice is essential. Voice is the soul of individuals. It gives meaning to their lives, a sense of purpose from which individuals can then draw upon for their own fulfilment and understanding of their realities.

Belenky et al. (1986:217) describe the role of the teacher as that of a midwife who draws from the students, "giving birth to their own ideas, in making their own tacit knowledge explicit and elaborating it". This enables students to develop authentic voices to understand their realities rather than taking and absorbing the realities of other people. The students who are allowed to speak and are listened to are recognized for their own thoughts. Their critical voice is validated, thus recognizing the individual's power. Their realities are accepted and respected, thus giving meaning to their lives and importance to the self.

The teacher-leaders in the study provided the students with numerous opportunities to use their "voices". These occasions enabled the students to express their thoughts and reflect upon them in an atmosphere of respect and acceptance. The students' voices were accepted and recognized rather than oppressed and this validated the students, encouraged them, and empowered them to trust their voices and to respect the voices of others.

When I was observing the two teachers in their interactions with the students, especially outside the classroom situation, I was reminded of the story of "Le Petit Prince" (St. Exupery, 1946). Le petit prince was the sole occupant of a different planet who had discovered the beauty of a relationship. On his small planet, he had discovered a rose which he thought was unique in the world and had cared for her, nurturing her and loving her. When he discovered a field full of roses on another planet, he became depressed. His rose was not unique, there were thousands of others like her. But the wise fox who happened along made him realize how special his rose was, for he had cared for her, he knew her, and he needed her and in return the rose needed him.

Through a pedagogy centered around the experiencing of one's own "voice" and listening to those of others, the students develop a trust that leads to important relationships with other students. It allows them to work together and to discover the importance of cooperation rather than competition. It also provides unique opportunities to develop relationships with teachers.

These relationships with adults in the school, the importance of which is too often undermined and ignored, is vital for the students. One important function for these relationships is to help the adolescents relate to the adult world. The students discover the meaning and significance of the adult world through the interaction with adults. By linking their voices to the adult voice in a safe and respectful environment where the students are heard, their voices are strengthened. However, in an oppressive environment where expressing oneself is discouraged, the students' voices are silenced. High school teachers, through their interactions with the students, have a unique opportunity to welcome adolescents into the world of adult, a sort of rite of passage into the adult world. Students are given a window into the world they are about to enter. In classrooms where teachers encourage student participation, the students are reassured that they can connect, they can fit in. In classroom where the voice is discouraged, the students feel more alienated.

Teacher-leaders are nurturing and caring people. Caring is the lifeline, it is the nourishment for creativity and the nourishment for the voice. Rogers (1983:124) describes it as "prizing the learners, prizing [their] feelings, [their] opinions, [their] persons". Through caring the students feel supported and accepted as individuals, each with their own reality. They feel loved.

By giving the students a strong voice in their classrooms, by establishing genuine relationships with their students and caring for them in an atmosphere of trust and love, Paula and Pat empower their students to create their own reality. Through their own voice, the students gradually discover who they are and can "invent" themselves into the person they want to be.

The students' response.

> If a child lives with acceptance, he [sic] learns to love. (Anonymous, 1972)

As mentioned in chapter IV, there was a noticeable similarities between the teachers' comments and the students' responses. Among the 49 students who responded to the questionnaire and the 12 students from the basketball team and the year play, very little was said that was negative towards the teachers. To the question "What do you not like about being in Pat's or Paula's class?" some answered "nothing", others wrote "I like everything". The negative comments that were given related to having homework, the difficulty of tests, the number of assignments, or the behavior of some students in the class.

As a researcher, I wondered why the responses were so favorable. The fact the teacher was going to see the questionnaire could have inhibited some students from being honest and sincere and they might have felt compelled to write only what they liked about the teacher. However, I find it difficult to doubt the sincerity of the students. Pat described the class which answered the questionnaire for her as a motivated class and an enjoyable one, "a lot of fun". Could Pat enjoy teaching and having fun with her students without it being reciprocated? As mentioned in chapter III, in spite of the offer to delay giving the questionnaire, Paula did not alter her plans to hand the questionnaire to the class she had reprimanded rather harshly during the previous class. The responses from that class were also very positive.

My perception is that when students feel respected, feel accepted and feel the teacher genuinely cares for them, they return that same respect and acceptance and will relate positively to the teacher. As one student wrote: "We often feel the adults are against you. So it's great to have an adult that supports you." They are influenced by Paula's and Pat's positive attitude and behavior. The students feel so good about being themselves that they see life in Paula's and Pat's classes from a positive perspective.

Since they have a voice and feel free to be themselves, they feel accepted. One student when asked what teachers like Paula contribute to the school, answered:

> They add to the school spirit. School is so stressful, we need a comic release. We need the support and the leadership and they provide that. When you have the support and

> lots of encouragement from the teacher, you work harder.

Another student described Pat as someone who "brings out the good side of everyone. On bad days she tries to encourage you. She has fun with us". It can be quite difficult to find weaknesses in someone who enjoy your company and "looks at your good side".

I am reminded of the poem quoted at the beginning of this section about how a child grows. The first line of the poem is:

> If a child lives with criticism, he [sic]
> learns to condemn (Anonymous, 1972).

The last line, on the other hand, states:

> If a child lives with friendliness, he [sic] learns the world is a nice place in which to live, to love and be loved (Anonymous, 1972).

For the students in Paula's and Pat's classes, they only stress the positive side of the teachers.

The differential influence on high school adolescents.

One of my nagging questions is, "How do female teacher-leaders influence high school women and men specifically?" I compiled the students' responses on the questionnaire according to gender to see if there were any noticeable differences. From the responses, it appears that there is very little difference. Both males and females students need to feel respected and accepted for who they are. There were, however, three incidents related by the teachers that give an indication of the kind of differential influence they have on students.

The first one relates to the incident in Pat's room, mentioned in chapter IV, involving a male student who told her she couldn't be as intelligent as Mr. X because she was a woman, and therefore he had asked to be transferred to another class. The administration and the parents did not acquiesce to his request and he remained in Pat's class for the rest of that year. However, the following year, having registered in Mr. X's class, he decided, after a few weeks, to transfer to Pat's class because he thought "she was the greatest".

The second incident, mentioned in chapter V, is the male student who explained how Pat was a role-model for him. He used to be shy and gave "the cold shoulder" to people around him. By observing Pat, he was able to overcome his shyness and start conversations with others. He now found it easier to socialize.

Both Paula and Pat talked about the male students who sometimes come to talk to them about the girls they love. Although the girls will often confide in them, this is quite unusual from male students. These anecdotes only confirm the effect female teacher-leaders can have on male students. Male teacher-leaders might have similar effect.

When asked if it was important to have female teacher-leaders like Paula in the school, the girls from the basketball team said:

> (They) gives us confidence in our career goals. If you see a women like her, then you know it's possible to be something. Gives you something to strives for. You want to be like them. Some male teachers support us also and can be role models but not in the same way.

Female teacher-leaders are positive role models for both female and male students. As one student said: "She treats you as a person, teaches you to be yourself, to be honest. She teaches you to be genuine, open and blunt".

The effect on colleagues and administrators.

The information on the influence of teacher-leaders on colleagues is very limited since it comes from the two study participants and the administrator who identified the teacher-leaders. To get a broader and more conclusive picture of teacher-leaders' influence on colleagues, the colleagues should be interviewed or surveyed about teacher-leaders. However due to the teachers' code of ethics, it is very difficult to determine the influence of teacher-leaders and its nature through a personal interview about specific teacher-leaders. Maybe a survey on teacher-leaders in general and on their influence on colleagues sent to a number of teachers in different schools would be more appropriate and would give us a more accurate picture.

Both Paula and Pat felt they had some influence but were not sure of the kind of influence and the extent of the influence. Pat sensed it when her department head commented about her influence with respect to the changes in the English Department over the past year. She has given "demonstration classes" for other teachers and will go into other classes at the request of the teacher to do a poetry unit. Paula also felt she had some influence on the teachers with whom she shared her teaching experiences. She mentioned, for example, that one teacher in the French Department comes to her for support and advice and how they have collaborated on certain projects.

The principal, however, was more confident of their influence. She believed that both teachers had a considerable influence on the staff. She noted the assistance they had given to new teachers on staff and mentioned she had noticed a change in attitude in some members of the faculty which she attributes to Paula's and Pat's influence.

Transformation of a Teacher

> Right Education comes with the
> transformation of ourselves.
> (Krishnamurti, 1953:50)

Like the adolescents who examine the contents of their knapsacks to better understand who they are, over the years, adults also continue to examine their own knapsacks to carry on their personal self-discovery. Krishnamurti (1953) explains it this way:

> Understanding comes only through self-knowledge, which is awareness of one's total psychological process. Thus education, in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each one of us that the whole of existence is gathered (p. 17).

The study was a prime opportunity for me to examine the contents of my own knapsack and to come to some greater awareness of my own self. At times, it was exciting and exhilarating. But there were also moments of reflection on my past experiences in the classroom when I wondered how I had applied my philosophy of education, (at times questioning if I was really aware of it). It brought me to re-examine my pedagogy and my beliefs about education.

Ferguson (1980) describes transformation "as an awakening, a new quality of attention (p. 97). Fortin (1991) explains transformation as the addition of new elements to one's beliefs without changing their essence (p. 25). In my reflection on my own teaching, there were both "awakenings" to new ideas and broadening of my pedagogical beliefs.

I accepted the fact that over the years my concept of education and the child had evolved with my experiences in the classroom, with the acquisitions of new skills, and through my readings and reflection of the world around me. However, I realized that my evolution had not gone as far as I had perceived it or even thought it to be. It became clear to me that although I understood the theory and the philosophy, the integration of it as praxis had not progressed as I had previously thought.

Although I adhere to the holistic concept to education and work to make learning meaningful to the students, I realized that although I was person-oriented, I was more concerned with helping the students become who I wanted them to be, rather than let them form their own vision. When discussing the right education, Krishnamurti (1953) states:

> When we are working together for an ideal, for the future, we shape individuals according to our conception of that future; we are not concerned with human beings at all, but with our idea of what they should be. The what _should be_ becomes far more important to us than what _is_, namely, the individual with his [_sic_] complexities. If we begin to understand the individual directly instead of looking at him [_sic_] through the screen of what we think he [_sic_] should be, then we are concerned with what _is_. Then we no longer want to transform the individual into something else; our only concern is to help him [_sic_] to understand himself [_sic_], and in this there is no personal motive and gain. If we are fully aware of what _is_, we shall understand it and so be free of it; but to be aware of what we are, we must stop struggling after something which we are not (pp. 21-22).

This led me to reflect on my teaching practice. Was I trying to mold the students into what I wanted them to be or what I thought society needed them to be or was I trying to help them understand themselves, discover who they were and free them from societal expectations? Although I recognized that my own beliefs centered on helping the students discover themselves and that I did create an atmosphere for interaction and self-reflection, to what extent was I really letting them be who they were, letting them "invent themselves"? Was I still being strongly guided by the content and the traditional role of the teacher or did I follow my desire to make learning meaningful to the students? Was I providing enough opportunities to the students to develop their voice? What did I do to encourage their voice? More important, what did I do to discourage their voice? How much true dialogue occurred? Was I trying to re-construct their reality into an ideal that they could not understand, nor hope to reach, an ideal I had invented for them?

On a more personal level, I questioned how much I allowed myself to be me. Was I more concerned about my image as a teacher and therefore played the role of the teacher? Did I, in spite of my own belief in the importance of being oneself, embrace the role of the teacher as "the transmitter" of knowledge or did I operate as a facilitator? What did it mean to be genuine? Was I afraid of being totally genuine, responding to the "should be" rather than responding to the intuition?

These questions have given me new insights on how I should improve my reflection process, and the kind of questions to keep in mind if I want my teaching to become significant and meaningful to the students' realities and visions. I was able to acknowledge that I was already doing some things that expressed my vision of education. Now, I needed to add to my understanding and look at my praxis with a different eye.

I was also led to reflect on my relationship with the teachers who came to me in my role as vice-principal or counsellor. Again, the process led me to believe that although my intentions were to facilitate their awareness of their own teaching praxis, my actions did not necessarily direct them to reflect on who they were but maybe more so on who to become. Education is not only leading students to new "awakenings" and new insights about who they are but encouraging the learner "to experience the integrated process of life" (Krishnamurti, 1953:20). We must also lead teachers to new "awakenings" and encourage them to continue to question and discover the self. For without the experience and the understanding, how can we as teachers encourage the students to be who they are if we ourselves don't understand the whole process of life, nor live "the experience of the integrated process of life"? Therefore, as an "educator" of teachers, I need to be more aware of my intentions when helping teachers and the process I use to help them.

Implications for further research

The stories of these two female teacher-leaders suggests that the topic of teacher-leaders needs further research. If indeed teacher-leaders have a considerable effect on the development of students as confirmed by the students in the study, then the ideal would be to have teacher-leaders in all classrooms.

Lori described teacher-leaders as people of personal integrity with a strong sense of their own identity and a vision. Their first concern is the empowering of students. They are not afraid to be creative and to risk to achieve their goals. Lori also talked about the importance of empowering teacher-leaders by giving them a voice in the decision-making, trusting and supporting their creativity and initiative in their activities.

Although describing what makes a teacher-leader is quite straightforward, the process of becoming one is not so easily understood. Further study is needed to understand how teacher-leaders evolve and how educators of teachers and administrators can assist in the development and support of teacher-leaders so as to have the kind of leaders students need.

Teacher-leaders use a student-centered approach to create a safe environment for learning and to facilitate the students' learning rather than give information. As stated by the students, this type of teaching is not as common as we think and has not always been encouraged. We need to recognize the conceptualization of teaching and of transformational leadership to further understand the concept of teacher-leader in the classroom. This could present a different perspective to the concept of teaching and assist in demythologizing teaching as the art of transmitting knowledge.

The teacher-leader's philosophy of learning and teaching comes from a student's perspective of discovering rather than a teacher's perspective of giving knowledge to students. This implies that the students become actively involved in their learning, the teacher being a guide to the students. The question of learning and how to facilitate learning, in the context of leading students to learn, needs to be further explored to understand the concept of teacher-leader.

The leadership of teacher-leaders, as related to the transformational model of leadership, extends beyond the classroom. It can have a positive effect on the school climate and culture. Their perspective can be a valuable contribution to the administration in developing policies and regulations. They can help other teachers develop their creativity and new skills for their classroom practice. However, teacher-leaders' impact beyond the classroom need to be studied if the school community is to benefit from their leadership.

Recognizing the benefits and the impact of teacher-leaders on the school community can no longer be ignored. Further studies in teaching and leadership can provide new ways of recognizing teacher-leaders and expand the concept of leadership in the school community.

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Appendix A

Letter of acknowledgement and confirmation

7-167 Education North
Department of Educational Administration
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Dear ___________,

I wish to thank you for accepting the invitation to participate in my study on Women Teacher-Leaders. The information of this study will be used to complete my thesis requirements for a Master's Degree in Educational Administration at the University of Alberta.

I also wish to restate the conditions for the studies which I discussed with you at the initial meeting on March 5. Your participation is voluntary and if you wish to withdraw from the study you may do so at any time during the study. All information will be kept confidential by the use of pseudonyms in any reporting be it verbal or written. Only I will have access to the tapes. You will receive a copy of the transcriptions of the tapes and the written reports for verification.

Thank you again for accepting to be a participant in my study. I appreciate the time you will be giving me for this study. Should you have any questions concerning the study please feel free to call me at 435-1315. I look forward to hearing your ideas concerning women teacher-leaders.

Sincerely,

Louise Joly
Master's Student
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

08/03/1991

Appendix B

Student Questionnaires

Student Questionnaire:

1. Describe what Mrs. ________ does that helps you to learn and to understand. Give examples.
2. What have you learned about yourself in her class?
3. How is this class different from other classes. Give examples.
4. How do you feel in this teacher's class?
5. What do you like about being in Mrs. ________ class? Give examples.
6. What do you not like about being in Mrs. ________ class? Give examples.
7. What do teachers like Mrs. ________ contribute to the school? Give examples.

Questions for members of Volleyball and Drama Groups:

1. What have you learned from working with Mrs. ________?
2. Tell me what's it's like to have Mrs. ________ as a coach/director.
3. Can you give me examples of how she works with students?
4. What does she do when their is conflicts?
5. What do teachers like Mrs. ________ contribute to the school? Explain, describe.